ONTARIO PARKS

# Spanish River Valley Minitegozibe Signature Site

## Preliminary Management Plan

Ontario

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## Approval Statement

2008-01131/

We are pleased to approve the *Spanish River Valley Minitegozibe Signature Site Preliminary Management Plan*, a step in the process to create an overall strategy for the protection and management of this significant site. This preliminary management plan reflects Ministry of Natural Resources' (MNR) intent to protect heritage features and values while maintaining and enhancing high quality opportunities for outdoor recreation and heritage appreciation for the residents of Ontario and for visitors to the province. The preliminary management plan also recognizes the importance of the continuance of sustainable resource management activities within the signature site.

This preliminary management plan provides details on how MNR proposes to guide and direct the resource stewardship, operations and development of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site, which is composed of: Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park, Spanish River Provincial Park, Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area Enhanced Management Area, Acheson Lake Enhanced Management Area and Ishpodnok Enhanced Management Area. The preliminary management plan frames the management of these significant areas according to their designation, goals, and objectives. The preliminary management plan also provides a summary of the public consultation that has occurred throughout this planning process.

An approved management plan will be completed following consultation on the preliminary management plan. The approved management plan will guide future resource stewardship, operations and development of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site.

Adair Ireland-Smith
Managing Director
Ontario Parks

Rob Galloway
Regional Director
Northeast Region

## Vision for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site

A vision statement has been prepared for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site to define its long-term strategic direction. All planning, management and operations of the signature site will be in keeping with the intent of this vision statement:

*"On the Canadian landscape, the Spanish River Valley will remain an outstanding semi-remote wilderness. Connected by the crossroads of a significant Aboriginal travel and trade corridor, the Spanish River Valley Minitegozibe Signature Site will serve as a model for responsible, balanced development. Remaining true to its environmental, cultural and traditional heritage values, the valley will continue to evoke passion and respect in outdoor enthusiasts for future generations."*

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## Statement of Environmental Values under the Environmental Bill of Rights

In accordance with the provisions of the Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) has prepared a Statement of Environmental Values. The EBR is to be considered through MNR's Statement of Environmental Values whenever decisions being made *might* significantly affect the environment. This includes decisions made during this planning process for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site.

The primary purpose of the EBR is "to protect, conserve and, where reasonable, restore the integrity of the environment." From MNR's perspective, this broad statement of purpose translates into four objectives in its Statement of Environmental Values:

*To ensure the long-term health of ecosystems by protecting and conserving our valuable soil, aquatic resources, forests and wildlife resources, as well as their biological foundations;*

*To ensure the continuing availability of natural resources for the long-term benefit of the people of Ontario, that is, to leave future generations a legacy for the natural wealth that we still enjoy today;*

*To protect natural heritage and biological features of provincial significance;*

*To protect human life, the resource base and physical property from forest fires, floods and erosion.*

MNR's Statement of Environmental Values has been considered in the development of this *Spanish River Valley Minitegozibe Signature Site Preliminary Management Plan*. This preliminary management plan will further the objectives of managing Ontario's resources on an ecologically sustainable basis.

## Planning Context

This preliminary management plan has been prepared consistent with direction contained in *Our Sustainable Future: Ministry of Natural Resources Strategic Directions* (2005a). MNR's vision is "sustainable development," and MNR's mission is "ecological sustainability." The Ontario Parks program contributes mainly to the goal of "Healthy Natural Environment for Ontarians," but contributes to other strategic elements as well. The mandate of MNR for Ontario Parks is to deliver Ontario's parks and protected areas program, which includes the protection and management of provincially significant natural, cultural, and recreational environments; provincial parks operations; provision of tourism opportunities, natural heritage education; planning and management of parks and protected areas; policy leadership on conservation reserves; and monitoring, auditing, and public-reporting on Ontario's parks and protected areas.

This document has also been prepared consistent with direction contained in *Protecting What Sustains Us: Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy* (2005b). Ontario Parks supports both the first goal: "Protect the genetic, species and ecosystem diversity of Ontario," and the second goal: "Use and develop the biological assets of Ontario sustainably, and capture benefits from such use for Ontarians." In particular, Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site will be managed to protect any species at risk and their habitats.

## Aboriginal Context

The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site is located within the 1850 Robinson-Huron Treaty Area. Sagamok Anishinawbek First Nation, Mattagami First Nation and Brunswick House First Nation all have traditional use interest in the signature site area.

Prior to European contact, the Ojibwa led a nomadic existence, relying on hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering for their subsistence. Fur trading posts were established in the Mattagami area in 1794 and 1813.

The Southeastern Ojibwa (Sagamok Anishinawbek) have occupied the area adjacent to the Spanish River prior to the 1840s. The Mattagami First Nation people are also descendants of the Southeastern Ojibwa. The Brunswick House First Nation band was formed due to their association with the New Brunswick House posts at Brunswick and Missinaibi lakes.

Nothing in this plan shall be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from the protection provided for the existing Aboriginal or treaty rights of the Aboriginal people of Canada as recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site captures a diverse landscape of rugged granite ridges, enduring forests, extensive wetlands, and an accommodating system of lakes and rivers. This intriguing area offers a distinctive blend of significant natural heritage, cultural heritage, recreational and commercial features and values.

Used as an important travel, trade and logging corridor, the Spanish River Valley has served as a significant crossroads from ancient time to the modern era. Pre-contact, the Spanish River was referred to as *Minitegozibe*, translated from Ojibwa as "the river of many islands". In order to be consistent with the cultural heritage of the river, the original name will be referred to where appropriate.

The signature site will continue to serve as a model for Aboriginal, recreational, commercial, and industrial interests co-operating on the same landscape. Utilization of the area's remarkable resources will be balanced with the protection of its outstanding semi-remote wilderness character. Preservation of the valley's unique natural and cultural heritage values will also be given the utmost regard.

This preliminary management plan outlines the preferred zoning, resource stewardship, development and operations for the signature site, and defines the context for further operation and implementation planning required after the final management plan is approved.

Spanish River and Biscotasi Lake provincial parks are not operational at this time; however, once a business analysis and operating plan has been completed for these protected areas, a level of public service may be provided. There are currently no official operating dates for the provincial parks and no user fees are collected.

### 1.1 What is a Signature Site?

Signature sites are distinctive geographic areas which showcase Ontario's natural and cultural heritage features. They were identified in 1999 as part of the *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (OMNR 1999a), referred to in the remainder of the document as the *Land Use Strategy*. The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site is one of nine signature sites in Ontario that were identified through this initiative.

Each signature site contains a mixture of land use designations and management approaches. Collectively, these sites serve to exemplify Ontario's distinctive natural heritage and, where applicable, protect significant cultural features. These sites have potential for enhanced resource protection and management, as well as enhanced tourism and recreational use. Some signature sites, including the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site, also have the capacity to support sustainable resource management activities.

The establishment of the signature sites is key to the Ministry of Natural Resource's (MNR) mandate to protect the diversity of natural, cultural and recreational features and values of Ontario. Together, these sites will augment ecological representation within the province, protect significant cultural heritage values, and provide tourism and recreational opportunities as part of the provincial parks and protected areas system.

### 1.2 Planning for the Signature Site

In accordance with the *Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual* (OMNR 1994a), resource management planning for provincial parks is completed in order to provide site-specific management direction for a regulated geographical area, typically a twenty-year horizon for a provincial park, and to set the context for routine park operations. The developed document is referred to as a park management plan. A signature site management plan is a more extensive initiative which integrates the management of multiple Crown land use areas with different land use designations but with the same life-span as a park management plan. The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site incorporates two provincial parks and three enhanced management areas (EMA) (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Reference Map for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site**

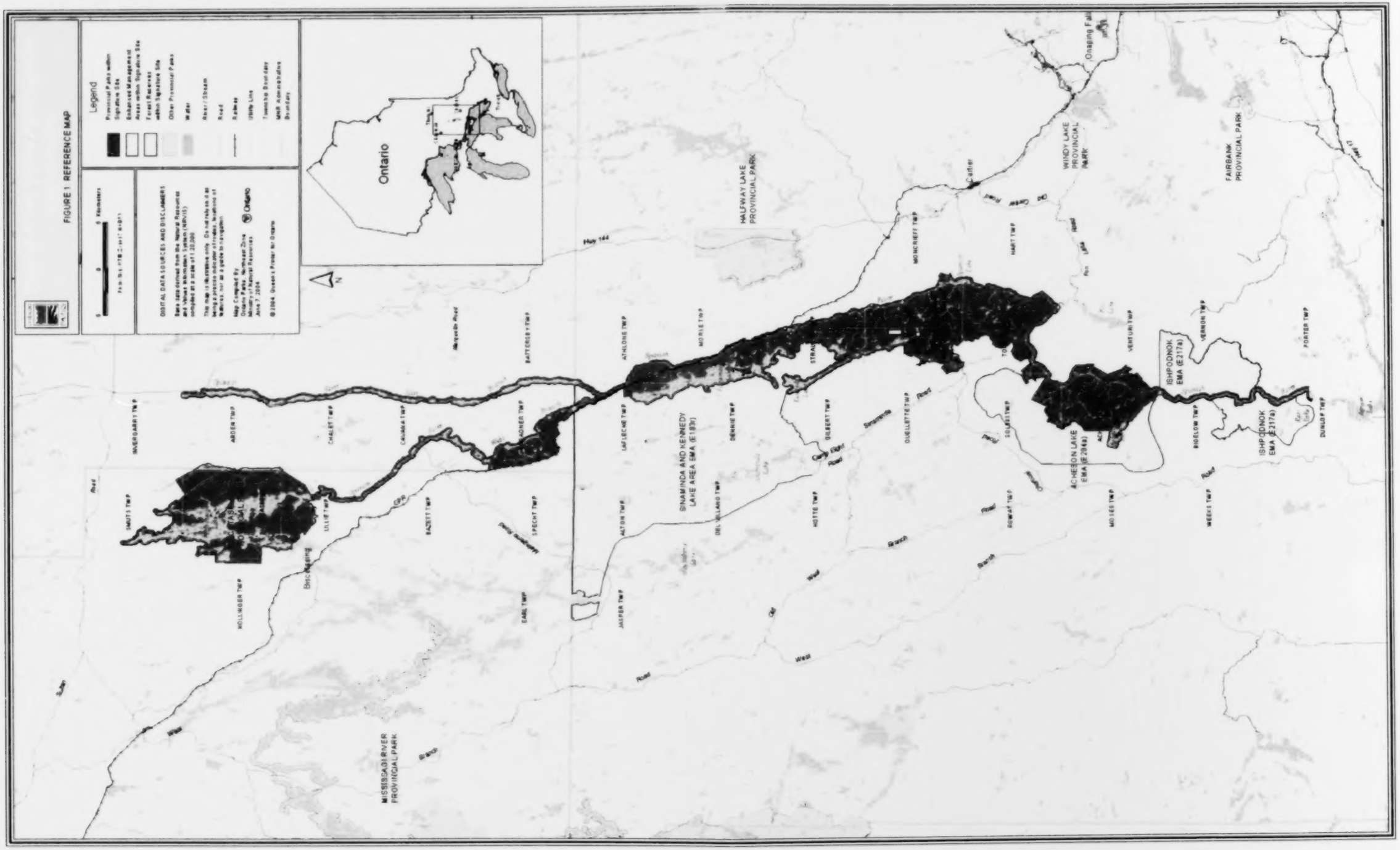
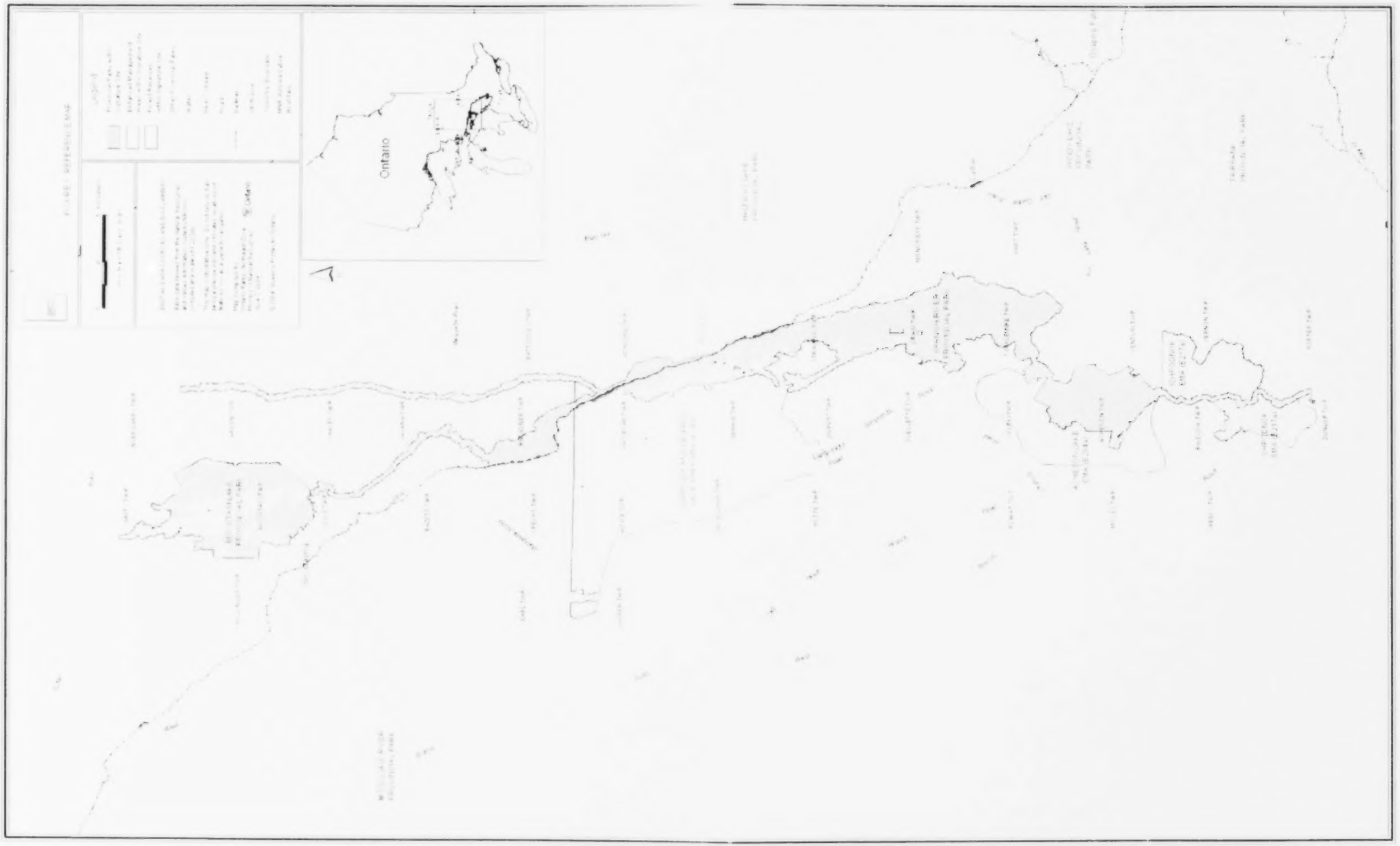


**Figure 1: Reference Map for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site**



This preliminary management plan identifies the proposed integrated management direction for the signature site, which will be finalized after Aboriginal and public consultation, and released as an approved management plan. Until the approval of the final management plan, the *Spanish River and Biscotasi Lake Interim Management Statement*, which provides interim management direction for the two provincial parks, will direct management activities (OMNR 2002a). Once the management plan is approved, amendments to the land use policies and permitted uses will be reflected in the *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas* policy reports (OMNR 2005c), referred to in the rest of this document as the *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas*, for each designated area of the signature site. Terms used in this preliminary management plan are defined in a Glossary in Appendix A.

Ontario Parks and MNR districts are responsible for undertaking the planning and management of the signature site. Provincial parks will be managed under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Royal Assent received on June 20, 2006 and proclamation pending), and EMAs will be managed under the *Public Lands Act* (1990), and the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act* (1994), in accordance with their respective Forest Management Plan (FMP) (i.e., Spanish Forest or Northshore Forest). Recognizing the intent to eventually incorporate some portions of the forest reserve into Spanish River Provincial Park, decisions regarding forest reserve management will be consistent with direction in the *Land Use Strategy* and the *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas*.

After the final signature site management plan has been approved, implementation plans will be prepared by MNR districts and Ontario Parks to provide further guidance for the resource stewardship, operations, and development of the signature site. This may include implementation plans for operations such as access, recreation, fisheries, and forest fire management.

## 1.3 The Spanish River Valley Minitegozibe Signature Site

The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site was identified as a featured area possessing outstanding scenery, waterways, and wildlife habitat in the *Land Use Strategy*. The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site is located approximately 80 kilometres northwest of the city of Greater Sudbury. The signature site includes the northeast portion of Biscotasi Lake, the upper portion of the Spanish River (both the east and west branches), and the river south to Agnew Lake. The site also contains a substantial land base to the west of Pogamasing Lake to Sinaminda Lake, south to Kennedy Lake, and portions of land near Acheson Lake, and Kerr Lake.

The signature site encompasses one existing and expanded natural environment provincial park, one new waterway provincial park, and three EMAs within MNR Sudbury, Chapleau, and Timmins administrative districts. This important group of interconnected areas, as described in Table 1, will integrate approximately 99,000 hectares of Crown land management:

**Table 1: Land Use Designations within the Signature Site**

| |
|---|
| **Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park**<br>P1572; Natural Environment Park; 12,283 ha<br>Regulated*: October 5, 2001 |
| **Spanish River Provincial Park**<br>P192; Waterway Park; 35,386 ha<br>Regulated*: October 5, 2001 |
| **Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA**<br>E193r; Recreation EMA; 34,461 ha |
| **Acheson Lake EMA**<br>E204a; Remote Access EMA; 8,627 ha |
| **Ishpodnok (formerly Swann Lake) EMA**<br>E217a; Remote Access EMA; 7,877 ha |

*Per *Provincial Parks Act* (1990), Reg. 951, Amendment 383/01.

A forest reserve designation associated with the Spanish River Provincial Park consists of areas that were initially identified for inclusion in the park but which have pre-existing mining claims or leases. The forest reserve is presently excluded from the provincial park land base but is considered to be contiguous with park values. Some of these areas will be added to the provincial park as mining claims or leases are retired through normal processes to improve the integrity of park features and values. A strategy for the forest

reserve has been prepared by MNR (see subsection *4.4 Forest Reserve*).

While there are some areas within the signature site that are accessible by road, the valley is considered to be semi-remote with limited development. The significant features and values of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site are described in the background information document (OMNR 2002b) and include:

- Provincially significant old growth white and red pine forest
- Provincially significant wetlands: floating cattail marshes, silver maple swamp and riverside fens
- Species at Risk: Bald Eagle nesting
- Fish and wildlife: important moose and fisheries habitat
- Geomorphological features: eskers, ice contact delta, meandering fluvial scrolls
- Cultural features and values: Aboriginal heritage, fur trade, logging

Spanish River Provincial Park is renowned for its exhilarating canoe routes and unique rail access, while Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park offers excellent opportunities for semi-remote camping, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

The focus of the EMAs is the provision of semi-remote recreational and commercial opportunities within the context of traditional resource management activities. These areas also complement and enhance the semi-remote wilderness character of the provincial parks.

## 2.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION

### 2.1 Public and Aboriginal Consultation Process

Aboriginal and public consultation for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site planning process began in the summer of 2001. The planning process for the preparation of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site Management Plan is as follows:

**Interim Management Statement**
Released in 2001

**Terms of Reference / Invitation to Participate**
Public consultation complete: October 2002

**Background Information**
Public consultation complete: November 2002

**Management Options**
Public consultation complete: October 2004

**PRELIMINARY MANAGEMENT PLAN**
Public consultation ongoing

**Approved Management Plan**
Public inspection when complete

Each stage has included the following: newspaper advertisements; distribution of notices and documents to First Nation communities, known stakeholders, and a mandatory contact list; posting a project proposal on the Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) registry; open houses and meetings; and distribution of the notice to Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) Ontario Parks zone and district offices, and two MNR information centres in Toronto and Peterborough.

Consultation and information-sharing with First Nation communities, such as Sagamok Anishinawbek, Brunswick House, and Mattagami will continue.

The dominant themes of the comments received to date are reflected in the objectives of this preliminary management plan, and also appear in section *2.2 Summary of Planning Topics*. Input that has been received thus far has been in the form of letters, faxes, emails, and comment sheets, as well as through meetings, and telephone conversations. A summary of the input that will be received in response to this preliminary management plan will be presented with the approved management plan for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site.

### 2.2 Summary of Planning Topics

Based on comments received during the planning process for the Spanish River Valley Minitegozibe Signature Site, a number of planning topics have been identified. The majority of these comments were received during the five information sessions at the

Background Information and Management Options planning stages for the signature site, as well as from meetings, letters, and phone calls. The Background Information sessions were held in November 2002 in Biscotasing, Chapleau, Gogama, Chelmsford, and Espanola, with a total of 187 people attending (generating 31 comment sheet responses). In September 2004, information sessions were again held in Biscotasing, Chapleau, Gogama, Chelmsford and Espanola to present the Management Options document and seek public feedback. There was a total attendance of 170 people over the five locations (generating 71 comment sheet responses).

Meetings and discussions with Aboriginal communities have also taken place throughout the planning process to obtain input regarding their values and concerns.

A brief summary of comments received from public consultation has been divided into the planning topics listed below. These planning topics are not in any particular order. Where appropriate, these planning topics have been integrated into the main objectives for the signature site, which can be found in section *3.3 Signature Site Objectives* and Table 2.

### 2.2.1 Aboriginal Interests

There is a need to ensure Aboriginal participation and respect for Aboriginal cultural heritage within the area. Traditional Aboriginal uses of the signature site, such as hunting, trapping, fishing, gathering, and travel, will continue, with consideration for public safety, conservation, and other concerns. Aboriginal people should derive economic benefit from the opportunities presented by the creation of the signature site in terms of training for youth, employment, and partnerships.

### 2.2.2 Access and Motorized Travel

A range of opinions on access were received during the consultation period. Some individuals believe that access should be improved while others believe that access should be limited. Some people also stated that existing access points need to be upgraded and maintained. Regarding motorized travel by snowmobiles and motorboats, a number of respondents commented that they would like all existing use patterns to continue.

A mixed view on the use of motorboats indicated that there should not be horsepower restrictions on the larger lakes (i.e., Biscotasi and Pogamasing), but that there could be a restriction on horsepower for the rest of the Spanish River and the smaller integrated lakes. Concerns regarding the use of all-terrain vehicles (ATV) were also raised. A desire to encourage environmentally friendly transportation methods was expressed. In order to maintain the semi-remote character of the area, a ban on personal watercraft (e.g., jet skis), and a limit on the number of houseboats on Biscotasi Lake were also proposed.

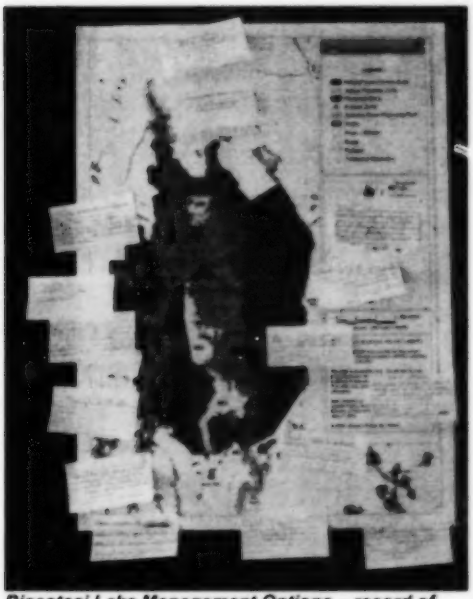
Private and commercial aircraft access and landing permits were other topics that were addressed by public comments. Affected tourism outfitters with operating businesses, as well as other people and organizations, commented on the need to have the semi-remoteness of the area maintained.

### 2.2.3 Boundary Refinement

Boundary extensions which would better protect the narrow waterway segments were suggested. (Earth and life science reports have also identified a need to adjust the boundaries of the Spanish River Provincial Park to include or improve the protection of significant natural features and values that were identified). Some concerns were expressed about the rationale for the boundaries of the enhanced management areas (EMA).

### 2.2.4 Commercial Tourism

Concerns were expressed about the potential impacts of new development. The majority of participants conveyed a desire to keep the valley protected in its current state, and suggested that there was sufficient tourism development. Other comments indicated an interest in providing tourism opportunities through private enterprise and sustainable development.



***Biscotasi Lake Management Options – record of comments from public open houses.***

Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation community members, traditional users of the area, are presently working with Ontario Parks and MNR districts to develop tourism opportunities within the signature site. These opportunities may take the form of guided tours, outfitting services, roofed accommodations (e.g., yurts), and so on, and may be established at various locations within the signature site.

### 2.2.5 Fish and Wildlife Conservation

There was an expressed interest in sustaining healthy fish and wildlife populations and ensuring that fishing and hunting opportunities continue within the valley. There was also general support for further research.

### 2.2.6 Forest Roads and Water Crossings

A significant planning topic for the Spanish River Provincial Park is the presence and use of the two bridges on the Metagama Road, which permit "forestry access only" crossings of the west and east branches of the Spanish River. Options were presented as to whether the bridges should continue, and whether there would be any conditions or restrictions if one, or both, remained. A split response to the bridge options was received, which showed support for the economic necessity of the crossings to the resource industry, as well as for the desire to remove both bridges and restore the area to a more natural, semi-remote setting.

### 2.2.7 Natural Resource Use and Harvest

Adjacent forest management practices and the compatibility of those practices with the provincial park values were also identified as a concern. Licensed commercial resource harvesters stated their interests in continuing their existing practices and privileges.

### 2.2.8 Operations and Development

A variety of opinions were expressed regarding the implementation of policies and facility development proposals identified during the development of the *Spanish River Valley Signature Site Management Options* (OMNR, 2004c). While some people wanted to see new facilities and improvements within the signature site, there were others who wanted to see the signature site left "as is." Concerns were also expressed about the need for more compliance with and enforcement of natural resource laws (e.g., camping, hunting, and fishing).

Some respondents were opposed to paying fees to visit the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. Others felt that fees could be charged for entry, aircraft landing, and camping fees, and that this revenue should be used to cover the enforcement and operational costs of the parks.

### 2.2.9 Recreation Management

The majority of respondents agreed that protecting the semi-remote character of the signature site was of primary importance. The main concerns for recreational use were waste management, activity restrictions, and increased visitor numbers.

An option to institute a can and glass bottle ban, in order to support waste management initiatives within the signature site, was presented. The concept was generally accepted; however, further definition of this and other waste management practices within the provincial parks was requested. Existing

users of the area were generally opposed to restrictions on their traditional activities, which include, but are not limited to, motorboating, snowmobiling, and hunting.

Local residents also expressed a concern about the large number of visitors which the signature site could attract to the area. An increase in visitor activity was viewed as a negative influence on existing experiences and businesses.

### 2.2.10 Water Resources

The recommendation for managing Biscotasi Lake as a whole unit, extending beyond the Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park to include the Mississagi River Provincial Park portions, was presented during public consultation. Concerns were expressed on water quantity, quality, and management (e.g., flow) of the Spanish River watershed, and the impacts upon recreational uses, and aquatic habitats. Water levels, perceived by some to be either too high or too low at critical times, are viewed as having negative impacts on shorelines. These issues would be considered in the updated *Spanish/Vermilion River Water Management Plan* (in prep.) and reflected within the approved management plan.

## 3.0 SPANISH RIVER VALLEY'S GOAL AND PRINCIPLES

### 3.1 Goal of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site

The goal for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site is:

*To protect, enhance and where necessary, restore the natural ecosystems, populations and semi-remote wilderness quality of the Spanish River Valley, while allowing for tourism, and recreational and industrial development which will not compromise the integrity and environmental values of the valley ecosystem.*

### 3.2 Principles of Planning for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site

Supporting the signature site's goal, five general principles have been developed to further outline the intent of Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site and guide future planning and management. The purpose of the signature site is to:

- Protect provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscape
- Recognize existing recreational and tourism opportunities, and to promote and manage future recreational opportunities including canoeing, ecotourism, camping, fishing, and hunting
- Provide opportunities for education, exploration, research, and appreciation of significant natural and cultural heritage features and values
- Provide Ontario residents and out-of-province visitors with tourism services and opportunities to discover and experience a diverse waterway of Northern Ontario, and
- Maintain current resource use levels as appropriate to the various land use designations and policies through an integrated planning process within and adjacent to the signature site.

### 3.3 Guiding Principles for the Signature Site

Table 2 provides a detailed list of guiding principles which were established using the background information, government direction, and public input received to date. All decisions regarding permitted uses, development, and activities in the provincial parks, enhanced management areas (EMA), and the forest reserve comply with the *Land Use Strategy* and their respective governing documents: provincial parks policies as outlined in *Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies* (OMNR 1992a) and Crown land use policies outlined in the *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas*.

## 4.0 LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) has established a number of protected areas throughout Ontario in the form of regulated

**Table 2: Categorized Guiding Principles for the Signature Site**

**Aboriginal Use**

- To ensure that Aboriginal and treaty rights, as identified under the Canadian Constitution, are recognized, and respected
- To encourage active involvement by the communities of Sagamok Anishnawbek, Brunswick House First Nation, and Mattagami First Nation; and, if required, other Aboriginal communities that express an interest to become involved
- To encourage local Aboriginal communities to benefit from economic opportunities generated through the planning and management of Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site
- To recognize Aboriginal traditional knowledge when making resource management decisions.

**Land Tenure**

- To encourage active involvement of land tenure holders throughout the planning process
- To ensure that current land tenure policies, terms and conditions are followed for existing properties, and that any Crown land disposition is compliant with the *Land Use Strategy*.

**Access**

- To ensure resource management access decisions reflect the semi-remote nature of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site
- To recognize the signature site's scenic, ecological, and land use values when considering the establishment of any roads
- To evaluate current access points, roads, and trails, and to strategically develop an appropriate level of access.

**Forestry, Mining, and Aggregates**

- To manage forest resources within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site, and adjacent Crown land, in keeping with the commitments of the *Ontario Forest Accord* (OMNR 1999b)
- To develop clear and defined land use and resource management direction for forest activities within the signature site, in order to protect identified cultural, aesthetic, recreational, and ecological values
- To develop clear and defined land use and resource management guidance for mineral exploration and development, and aggregate activities within the signature site, in order to protect identified cultural, aesthetic, recreational, and ecological values.

**Tourism and Recreation**

- To provide and promote high quality outdoor recreation experiences which do not compromise the integrity of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site ecosystem
- To educate visitors, through interpretation, about the significant and unique values of the signature site, such as canoe routes, old growth forests, and the historic travel corridor
- To allow for existing tourism operations, and to consider the development of new tourism and recreation opportunities in the signature site
- To ensure that existing activities and any tourism or recreation development occurs in such a way that the current capacity of the natural resource base is not exceeded and the semi-remote experience within the signature site is maintained.

**Provincial Parks and Enhanced Management Areas**

- To evaluate the boundaries of the provincial parks and EMAs to ensure that the protection of significant natural, cultural, and recreational values is achieved; and recommend, if required, boundary adjustments provided that the objectives of the approved *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management Plan*, the *Land Use Strategy*, and the *Ontario Forest Accord* are met (refer to section *10.3 Future Boundary Refinement*).

**Table 2: Categorized Guiding Principles for the Signature Site (continued)**

**Fisheries**

- To protect and sustain aquatic ecosystems and populations within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site, while allowing for the benefits of Aboriginal subsistence, baitfish harvesting, and recreational fishing
- To manage a sustainable recreational fishery while providing for enhanced opportunities, where possible
- To protect aquatic ecosystems from the introduction of non-native species which may have a negative impact on native species and the aquatic environment
- To foster partnerships for fisheries habitat management, data collection, and public education
- To document and protect species at risk, and other fish species.

**Wildlife**

- To protect and sustain wildlife habitat and populations within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site, while allowing for the beneficial use of wildlife (e.g., viewing, photography, hunting, trapping)
- To enhance hunting opportunities in the signature site
- To promote opportunities for non-consumptive uses of wildlife (e.g., nature appreciation, interpretation, education, scientific study)
- To protect wildlife habitat from the introduction of non-native species which may have a negative impact on native species and the terrestrial environment
- To foster partnerships for the achievement of wildlife habitat management, data collection, and public education
- To document and protect species at risk, and other wildlife species.

**Vegetation Communities**

- To determine, using local knowledge, science, and modeling tools, the appropriate means to maintain a natural variety of vegetative cover (e.g., diversity of age class, forest type, and habitat type)
- To acknowledge the role of natural disturbances (e.g., fire, blow down) on the landscape and to manage these in a manner that is in compliance with current MNR directives, policies, and guidelines
- To document and protect species at risk, and other plant species
- To protect terrestrial ecosystems from the introduction of non-native species, which may have a negative impact on native species and the terrestrial environment.

**Cultural Heritage**

- To identify, document, and respect the cultural and historical values of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site, and to ensure their protection through zoning, legislation, and public education
- To encourage the development and promotion of facilities, initiatives, and partnerships which enhance the conservation, interpretation, and understanding of the signature site's cultural heritage.

**Water Resources**

- To ensure that the degradation of water quality does not occur as a result of tourism, or recreational or industrial development in the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site
- To synthesize the objectives, strategies, and management activities of both the approved *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management Plan* and the new *Spanish/Vermilion Rivers Water Management Plan*.

provincial parks and conservation reserves. The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site contains two regulated provincial parks and three unregulated enhanced management areas (EMA). These areas collectively provide protection for natural, cultural, and recreational features, while offering opportunities for semi-remote outdoor recreation and tourism. The inclusion of the EMAs, and the cooperative land use planning among MNR Chapleau, Timmins, and Sudbury districts, Ontario Parks and industrial and commercial enterprises may bring more certainty to sustainable long-term resource management.

The authority and direction for signature site planning is based on legislation and policies which govern provincial parks and Crown land within Ontario. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Royal Assent received on June 20, 2006 and proclamation pending)*, *Public Lands Act*, *Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies*, *Land Use Strategy*, and additional policy clarification statements, and the *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas*.

The provincial parks and EMAs of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site have similarities and differences in their policies and management guidelines. Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park was originally regulated as a recreation class park in 1989. Additions to Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park (redesignated as natural environment class), and the designated Spanish River Provincial Park (waterway class) were regulated in 2001 under the *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Royal Assent received on June 20, 2006 and proclamation pending)*.

The two provincial parks are governed by direction in the *Land Use Strategy*, the *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas*, and provincial park policies, procedures, and bulletins. The Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA, Acheson Lake EMA and Ishpodnok EMA are designated by, and will follow, policy direction as described in the *Land Use Strategy*, and the *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas*. The approved signature site management plan will guide activities that occur within the EMAs, and help sustain the semi-remote wilderness character of the signature site.

The forest reserve designation occurs within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. As stated in the *Land Use Strategy*, forest reserves will be managed to complement the protected area.

MNR districts and Ontario Parks are public agencies of the Crown, and are subject to the *Environmental Assessment Act* (1990). Land and resource development within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site will be carried out in accordance with applicable legislation, policies, and guidelines as appropriate: either *A Class Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development* (OMNR 2003a), and/or the *Declaration Order regarding MNR's Class Environmental Assessment Approval for Forest Management on Crown Lands in Ontario* (OMNR 2003b), and/or *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves* (OMNR 2005d). Projects conducted outside of the signature site which may have an impact on values or features within the signature site may be commented on to address integrated management, based on direction in the approved signature site management plan.

The aforementioned policies and documents establish the direction for planning and management of the protected areas within the signature site and have been integrated into this preliminary management plan. The *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas* will be updated to reflect any policy changes which may result from the process to create an approved management plan.

***Little Pogamasing Lake***

## 4.1 A Strategy for Integrated Management

Resource management direction for the signature site's two provincial parks and three EMAs has been integrated into this preliminary management plan. This preliminary management plan includes sufficient information to support rational and effective management decisions for the signature site by incorporating and building on OMNR's *Land Use Strategy*, *District Land Use Guidelines* (1983a-d), *Spanish River Special Area Plan – Final Amendment* (1990), *Biscotasi Lake Local Area Land Use Strategy – Final Amendment* (1992b), and the *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas*. The preliminary management plan also works in concert with the approved *Spanish/Vermilion Rivers Water Management Plan* (within the February 2005 draft of the *Spanish/Vermilion River System Water Management Planning Background Scoping Report*) (Domtar Inc., INCO Ltd. and OMNR 2005), as well as OMNR's *Spanish Forest Management Plan* (2004a), *Northshore Forest Management Plan* (2004b) and the *Ontario Forest Accord* (1999b).

The provisions in the *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management Plan*, once approved and released, will replace the *Spanish River Special Area Plan* and parts of the *Biscotasi Local Area Land Use Strategy* amendment to the *Chapleau District Land Use Guidelines*, and the *Gogama District Land Use Guidelines*, and will give direction for forest management planning.

## 4.2 Provincial Parks

### 4.2.1 A System of Protected Areas

Ontario's provincial parks are regulated by the *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Royal Assent received on June 20, 2006 and proclamation pending)* and are managed to ensure that their natural, cultural, and recreational features and values are protected. The goal of the provincial parks system is "to provide a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities and to protect provincially significant natural, cultural and recreational environments in a system of provincial parks" (OMNR 1992a p.11).

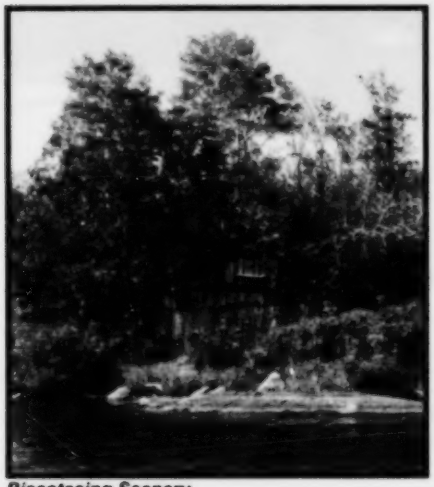
Ontario's system of provincial parks is comprised of a variety of regulated parks which are subdivided into six distinct classes: wilderness, nature reserve, historical, recreation, waterway, or natural environment. Each park classification has its own function, characteristics, and management framework, as well as distinctive planning, management, and visitor policies. Specific management strategies for Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River provincial parks are described in section *7.0 Resource Stewardship Policies*, section *8.0 Operation Policies*, and section *9.0 Development Policies*.

### 4.2.2 Provincial Park Classification

Two different classifications of provincial parks occur within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. The largest component of the signature site, the Spanish River Provincial Park, is classified as a waterway park, owing to the linear nature of its respective system of rivers, lakes, and corresponding park boundary. According to *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies*, waterway parks are those landscapes which "incorporate outstanding recreational water routes, with representative natural features and historical resources to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences" (OMNR 1992a p. 25).

Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park is classified as a natural environment park, due to its character as a generally undeveloped backcountry landscape. Natural environment parks are those areas which "incorporate outstanding recreational landscapes with representative natural and historical features to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences" (OMNR 1992a p. 25).

***Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park***



***Biscotasing Scenery***

Each park contains distinct zones which provide a context for more area specific landscape management. The types of zones and their compatible uses are defined in section *6.0 Zoning*.

### 4.2.3 Objectives for Provincial Parks

Provincial parks have four main objectives: protection, heritage appreciation, recreation, and tourism (OMNR 1992a). The objectives of the provincial parks within the signature site are:

**Protection**: To protect a series of provincially and regionally significant wetlands, old-growth pine forests, and glacial and geological values and features.

**Heritage Appreciation**: To provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the abundant natural and cultural heritage values on the Spanish River Valley landscape.

**Recreation**: To provide outdoor recreation opportunities ranging from day-use visits to multi-day backcountry excursions associated with the upland, river and lakeland features of the Spanish River Valley landscape.

**Tourism**: To provide Ontario's residents and visitors with opportunities to discover and experience the distinctive features and values of the Spanish River Valley landscape.

By fulfilling these objectives, the aim is to protect, plan, develop and manage the protected areas of the Spanish River Valley landscape on an ecologically sustainable basis while improving financial self-reliance.

## 4.3 Enhanced Management Areas

EMAs are a new land use category established by the *Land Use Strategy* to provide detailed land use direction for Crown land. The Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area, Acheson Lake, and Ishpodnok EMAs are managed under the *Public Lands Act*. The EMAs are intended to complement the semi-remote nature of the park components of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site, while allowing for resource extraction activities to continue. These semi-remote, semi-roadless areas will be maintained by managing the creation and rehabilitation of roads and trails into and through the signature site. The EMAs within the signature site are administered by MNR Sudbury District.

The Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA is designated as a recreation class EMA for its high quality recreational potential. A recreation class EMA is an area with high recreational use or significant recreational values for activities such as angling, hunting, motorized and pedestrian trail use, and canoeing. Because of this increased level of recreational activity, a basic level of zoning will be utilized for the Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA to guide management decisions in the area, as described in section *6.3.1 Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area Enhanced Management Area*.

Acheson Lake and Ishpodnok are classified as remote access class EMAs in order to complement the adjoining Spanish River Provincial Park in providing high-quality semi-remote hunting and fishing opportunities. Remote access class EMAs are intended to maintain the semi-remote character of areas, and to provide the public and tourism operators with high-quality semi-remote recreational experiences including hunting, fishing, canoeing, and camping.

This document will outline the specific focus of each EMA and the applicable guidelines and management strategies which will be applied. The approved management plan will direct resource management and recreation activities

that occur, and will be implemented through resource management planning.

## 4.4 Forest Reserve

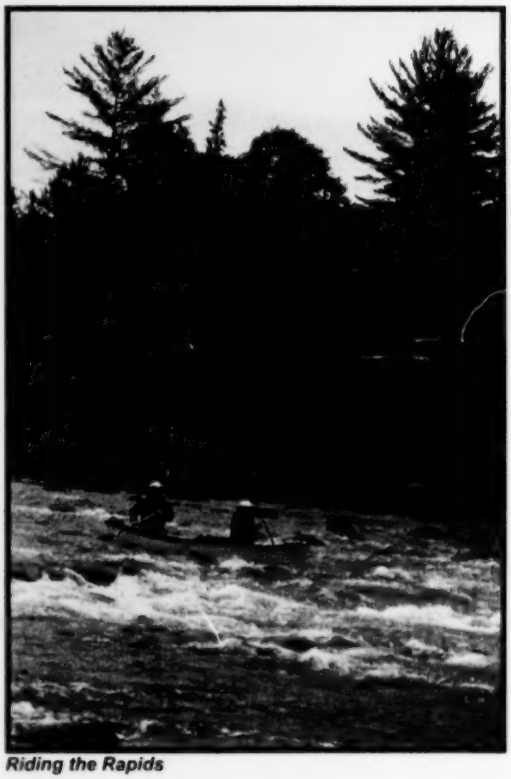
Forest reserves were designated under the *Land Use Strategy* in areas where existing mining claims overlapped with proposed protected areas. A forest reserve is an area where the protection of natural heritage and special landscapes is a priority, but mineral development may occur, including the necessary means of access and required infrastructure. The intent is that some of these areas may be added to the park if a claim or lease is retired through normal processes.

The forest reserve associated with the Spanish River Provincial Park incorporates six active mining leases and claims (or portions thereof), and three inactive claims, with a total area of 116 hectares in Straleck, Craig, Tofflemire, and Dunlop townships. These mining lands abut or are within the boundary of the provincial park, and are collectively referred to as the Spanish River Forest Reserve (F192). A strategy for forest reserves has been prepared by MNR (OMNR 2005e). This strategy describes which claims or leases have lapsed and may be added to the park, and which claims or leases are being proposed for redesignation as general use areas. The strategy also describes which claims or leases are presently active but may be added to the park once they have lapsed, or are retired through normal processes.

The forest reserve is not regulated within the park. The *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas* policy report for the Spanish River Forest Reserve (F192) provides guidelines for land use activities within the forest reserve.

Mining lands, such as claims and leases, are recognized under the *Mining Act* (1990). Mining lands designated as forest reserves allow for mineral exploration, mining, and related access to continue. Commercial forest harvesting, new hydroelectric power development, peat extraction, and disposition for private use will not be allowed, but most other resource and recreational uses may be permitted, provided that they are consistent with park values.

Within a forest reserve, mineral exploration may lead to mine development. In order to keep the claims active, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM) requires that a minimum amount of assessment work is completed annually and filed with the MNDM. Necessary access across park lands, in order to access existing mining lands, for mineral exploration or development purposes, is permitted with appropriate consideration being given to the protection of park values. The development of access roads leading to mining land, as well as existing roads and other development within the forest reserve, are subject to applicable *Environmental Assessment Act* requirements.



***Riding the Rapids***

## 4.5 Land Use Designations Adjacent to the Signature Site

To effectively achieve protection and management of the features and values of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site, the signature site cannot be managed as an independent unit on the broader landscape. The resource management and recreational activities on surrounding Crown land and protected areas may potentially affect values within the signature site, and vice-versa.

The approved management plan will include considerations that are relevant to adjacent Crown land management (e.g., roads and access). The *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas* policy reports for the following Crown land use areas may be amended to reflect those considerations:

**General Land Use Areas**

There are nine general land use areas within the MNR districts of Sudbury, Timmins, and Chapleau which are adjacent to the signature site: General Mixed Use Areas (G1770 and G1797); Biscotasi / Ramsey / Indian Mixed Use Area (G1795); Gogama Resource Area (G1809); Onaping -Three Corner Lake Area (G1814); Highways Number 6 and Number 17 Hinterlands (G2033); The West Branch (G2035); Spinweb - Gilbert Lakes (G2037); and Venetian Lake / Ministic Lake (G2048).

**Enhanced Management Areas**

Mozhabong Lake Access Area (E288a) and Biscotasi Lake (E1044r) EMAs are adjacent to the signature site. The intent for both areas is to enhance recreation values.

**Provincial Parks**

Mississagi River Provincial Park (P238) adjoins the boundary of Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park. Operation and implementation (e.g., recreation management) between the two parks will be harmonized and direction will be reflected during management planning for Mississagi River Provincial Park.

**Conservation Reserves**

There are no conservation reserves bordering the signature site. Mozhabong Lake (C323), Flat Creek Old Pine (C223), Centre Creek Old Growth (C206) and Onaping Lake (C322) conservation reserves are in close proximity to the signature site. Mozhabong Lake and Onaping Lake are part of important canoe routes connecting with the Spanish River Valley.

# 5.0 SIGNATURE SITE BOUNDARIES AND LOCAL LAND USE

The following section describes the general setting of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. For more detailed information on the signature site, please refer to the *Spanish River Valley Signature Site Background Information* document.

## 5.1 Boundaries

The boundary of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site is elongated and irregular. The long linear waterway park extends 140 kilometres from north to south. The signature site is approximately 99,000 hectares in size The signature site is virtually surrounded by Crown land, with a few physical features delineating its boundary. An exception to this is along the west boundary of Spanish River Provincial Park, which is delineated by a section of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR).

The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site encompasses 34 townships: Acheson, Alton, Arden, Athlone, Battersby, Bazett, Bigelow, Biscotasi, Breadner, Cavana, Chalet, Craig, Del Villano, Dennie, Dunlop, Gilbert, Hart, Hollinger, Hotte, Invergarry, Jasper, LaFleche, Lillie, Moncrieff, Morse, Moses, Porter, Solski, Smuts, Straleck, Tofflemire, Venturi, Vernon, and Weeks. All of the above townships fall in the territorial District of Sudbury, except for Del Villano and Hotte townships, which fall in the territorial District of Sault Ste Marie.

## 5.2 Existing Access and Development

There are a variety of means for accessing the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. Visitors and users can enter the site via water, road, rail, air, and trails. Floatplane landings for commercial purposes also occur.

### 5.2.1 Primary Access

The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site is known for its reasonable access coupled with its semi-remote recreational opportunities. The signature site is approximately a one-and-a-half hour drive northwest of Sudbury on Highway 144 and approximately six hours from the Greater Toronto Area, via Highway 69. Currently, two commercial operators provide fly-in services into the parks and surrounding areas. Biscotasing, Duke Lake, Sheahan (Pogamasing Lake), and The Elbow are the primary road and rail access points. The railroad is a traditional and unique method of accessing various parts of the Spanish River. The river system interconnects with numerous canoe routes, providing opportunities for exploring a diverse combination of routes.

#### Road Access

Highway 144, between Sudbury and Timmins, provides a number of ways to access the northern portion of the signature site. A short access road, located 84 kilometres north of Cartier, provides access from Highway 144 to Duke Lake, on the east branch of the Spanish River. Biscotasi Lake and the west branch of the Spanish River can be accessed from the hamlet of Biscotasing, via the Sultan Industrial Road at the junction of highways 144 and 560, approximately 38 kilometres south of Gogama.

To the west of Cartier or Onaping Falls, the Old Cartier Road, which becomes the Fox Lake Road, provides seasonal access to The Elbow, just above the Graveyard Rapids on the Spanish River. This location is used as an access point to begin or end shorter trips along the Spanish River.

The main access road into the Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area Enhanced Management Area (EMA) is from the West Branch Road and Camp Eight Road (public forest access points) to an access point at the southern point of Sinaminda Lake.

#### Rail Access

The CPR has provided rail access to the Spanish River Valley since the mid-1880s. VIA Rail continues to service the area using a self-propelled rail diesel car, called the Budd Car. Travelling from Sudbury to White River, and bisecting the Spanish River near Pogamasing Lake, this two-car service operates every other day in each direction, east and west, allowing passengers the luxury of being dropped off or picked up anywhere on the line. The favoured locations to access the Spanish River canoe route are at Biscotasing, Metagama, The Forks, Sheahan, and Pogamasing. Camp owners, hunters, and anglers use the same access points, as well as various other stops along the line.

#### Water Access

Being an extensive canoe route, stretching nearly 140 kilometres, the Spanish River Valley has numerous locations for access. The signature site is an important junction for a variety of canoe routes that have been historically used for travel and trade.

#### Access Management

The management of access into the signature site has been identified as a fundamental measure to protect the signature site's features and values. To maintain the impression of semi-remoteness, access will be focussed on a number of good quality, evenly distributed access points. The option to develop improved facilities at road-accessible locations (parking, washrooms, boat launches, docks, etc.) has been considered, and is discussed further in section *9.0 Development Policies*. Approved access locations for recreational visitors to the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site are outlined for each provincial park and EMA in section *6.0 Zoning*.

### 5.2.2 Development

There are no permanent communities or settlements within the signature site; however, forestry and mining sectors, camp owners,

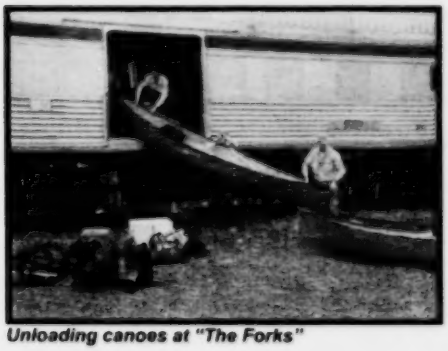
hunters, anglers, and general recreationists use the area. Existing Crown land activities and development within and adjacent to the signature site include trails, roads, timber harvesting, trapping, remote commercial tourism, and public recreation. Some infrastructure exists within the signature site which supports recreational and tourism opportunities such as cottaging, fishing, hunting, camping, canoeing, wildlife viewing, hiking, and snowmobiling. Ontario Parks has not developed any facilities within the parks, although an existing log cabin will be used as an interior ranger facility.

Within the signature site, there are a number of locations that provide informal parking, tent sites, and fire pits, which have been in use for several decades. The three most notable locations within the signature site are Duke Lake, The Elbow and Sinaminda Lake.

A section of the CPR rail line borders Spanish River Provincial Park and crosses the Spanish River, immediately north of Sheahan. Other notable development within the signature site are water control structures at the outflow of Biscotasi Lake, Pogamasing Lake, and Sinaminda Lake, as well as at the inflow of the Dead River (see subsection *7.7.2 Water Control Structures* for more information).

## 5.3 Tenure

A number of land use permits and patented private properties are located within the signature site. The land use permits are currently used for either commercial tourism or private recreational purposes. Private land is excluded from the regulated protected area boundaries. Private land is not governed by the policies in this preliminary management plan.



***Unloading canoes at "The Forks"***

## 5.4 Recreation

Ontario Parks has completed recreational assessments for both provincial parks. In conjunction with the recreation inventory, a recreational use survey was conducted during the summers of 2002 and 2003. Results indicate that the Spanish River is primarily used during the late spring and summer for paddling, cottaging, and fishing pursuits. Recreational use declines in the fall, and light use occurs during the winter for snowmobiling and ice fishing. In comparison, Biscotasi Lake has a stable level of visitor use from spring to fall due to the angling and hunting opportunities. A more detailed study on visitor use and distribution throughout the signature site may be required.

## 5.5 Commercial Land Use

### 5.5.1 Commercial Resource Harvesting

Portions of 25 registered trap lines, as well as nine trap cabins, are within the signature site. The primary species of economic importance are beaver and pine marten. Individual quotas to harvest beaver, marten, fisher, and lynx are set by MNR for each trapline area.

Twenty authorized bear management areas of varying size are located within the signature site. Of the 34 townships within the signature site that are available for baitfish harvesting, 23 are currently allocated to 14 harvesters. Baitfish harvesting services provide bait to local businesses which to support the popular angling industry.

### 5.5.2 Forest Management

Historically, the forest industry has been a major presence in the Spanish River valley. During the 1880s, the construction of the CPR rail line made the extensively forested areas of this region accessible for the first time. Consequently, much of the area has been subjected to intense logging activity over the past 100 years. Initially, production was for the supply of construction material needed by the railways, and for white and red pine square timbers that were headed to mills in Michigan, and later to mills located along Georgian Bay. A detailed history of forestry in the area is

available in the *Spanish River Valley Signature Site Background Information* document.

Forest management plans (FMP) are developed by MNR and Sustainable Forest License (SFL) holders to define and guide forestry operations and planning within a Forest Management Unit (FMU). Two FMUs are associated with the signature site: Spanish Forest and Northshore Forest. Within the current FMPs, harvest allocations and renewal operations are adjacent to the protected areas and within the EMAs. Forest harvests will not occur within the provincial parks, and adjacent forest management will be conducted in a manner that will assist in the protection of the provincial parks features and values (OMNR 1999a).

### 5.5.3 Mining and Mineral Exploration

Six active claims or leases either abut or are enclosed by the Spanish River Provincial Park in the townships of Straleck (one), Craig (two), Tofflemire (two) and Dunlop (one) (refer to subsection *4.4 Forest Reserve*). An active aggregate permit on mining leases to quarry a carbonatite volcanic pipe exists near The Elbow on the Spanish River (in Tofflemire and Venturi townships). Agricultural Mineral Prospectors Inc., who acquired the property in 1992, operates the surface deposit.

## 6.0 ZONING

Provincial park zoning allocates lands and waters for their most appropriate use based on their protection requirements and their potential for recreation. The concept of zoning recognizes that each provincial park possesses a unique combination of natural and cultural resources and features, as well as existing and potential recreational activities and experiences. Provincial parks are zoned according to *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies* and the *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Royal Assent received on June 20, 2006 and proclamation pending)*.

Zoning prescriptions will be applied to Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River provincial parks, and to the Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area Enhanced Management Area (EMA). Zoning maps for the signature site are provided in Appendix B.

Detailed planning will be applied to the Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA, and it will be in accordance with existing forest management planning direction for the associated forested area. EMAs have been designated under the *Land Use Strategy* and are not subject to provincial park policies and procedures, but continue to be governed under the *Public Lands Act*. However, since the intent of the EMAs is to sustain and enhance the semi-remote character of the Spanish River Valley while providing for existing commercial and industrial uses, some of the areas require a certain level of additional planning to help guide such activities.

## 6.1 Provincial Park Zoning Policies

There are six types of park zones that can be delineated in the planning of provincial parks: Access, Development, Historical, Natural Environment and Wilderness. The designation of zones allows for site specific management of diverse landscapes and activities. All activities are not appropriate for all areas. For example, an area with rare or sensitive vegetation may be zoned as a nature reserve, a designation which restricts use to very low-impact activities, thus affording that site the highest level of protection.

When new information becomes available through future assessments or planning, or if there are significant demonstrated conflicts as a result of specific land uses, then enhanced protection of heritage values may be considered. This may be carried out through a change in zoning or an amendment to the approved *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management plan*. The individual zones and planning areas for the provincial parks and EMAs are described in the following sections.

***Carbonatite Extraction***

### 6.1.1 Access Zones

Access (A) zones serve as staging areas, and have minimal facilities, such as access roads and parking lots. They provide a controlled entry point into the park for low-impact recreational activities.

Development is limited to roads, parking lots, visitor control structures, basic day-use facilities, and self-use orientation, interpretation, and education structures. Development may include basic commercial services such as outfitting for backcountry users and research and management facilities.

Some existing access locations in the signature site have been retained as access zones and will be managed as authorized access points. All other access locations will be physically closed and may be restored to a natural condition.

There is no road-based access point for Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park. Entry is either by water or air. Road or rail access is available to the hamlet of Biscotasing, located three kilometres to the southwest. The intent is to maintain the existing, limited access points to north-eastern Biscotasi Lake.

Being a long narrow waterbody that is connected to a number of other water systems, the Spanish River offers many options for access. To maintain the current impression of semi-remoteness, the intent is to focus access on a number of high quality, evenly-distributed access points. Through ongoing discussions with VIA Rail, the promotion of entry and exit of the signature site by rail will be encouraged, as this is a highly marketable form of access.

Under the waterway park classification, certain types of camping may be permitted in access zones in Spanish River Provincial Park. The option of developing improved facilities at road-accessible locations (parking, washrooms, boat launches and docks, etc.) has been considered and such locations are further discussed in the next subsection.

The use of all-terrain vehicles (ATV) or off-road vehicles (ORVs) will not be permitted in access zones, unless an authorized trail is designated by the park superintendent.

### 6.1.2 Development Zones

Development (D) zones provide the main access to the signature site, with facilities and services for a wide range of day-use and camping activities. Development zones within waterway parks usually contain facilities to manage important trailhead locations, in the form of visitor control structures, day-use infrastructure, small car campgrounds, administrative offices, and basic commercial services. As well, there may be orientation, interpretive, educational, research, and management activities. In general, development zones receive more use and allow for more site infrastructure than access zones.

The use of ATVs and ORVs will not be permitted in development zones, unless an authorized trail is designated by the park superintendent.

### 6.1.3 Historical Zones

Historical (H) zones include any significant archaeological and historical resources that require different management from adjacent zones. Minimal development allows for visitor exploration and appreciation, as well as scientific research. The priority for historical zones is protection, cultural heritage appreciation, and research.

The Spanish River has a long and exceptional history as a crossroads for a variety of purposes, from primitive travel routes, to fur trading, to logging. The six historical zones found within the signature site represent some of the best natural and cultural history of the area, which includes pictographs scribed by an ancient culture, a historic Hudson's Bay Company outpost location, and the remains of the old sawmill community of Wye. Many of the documented archaeological and Aboriginal sites were identified in previous studies by Hanks (1980) and Adams and Errington (1991). The fur trade sites are of local significance to the communities of Biscotasing and Pogamasing Lake, and the varied and scattered cultural remnants of the early logging period are of regional significance.

***Old Logging Cabin near Sheahan***

A possible fur trade post has been identified within the Duke Lake area. Further archaeological research may be undertaken to assess the validity and significance of the site. If the site is found to be significant, re-zoning the area as a historic zone may be considered in order to protect the cultural value.

The use of ATVs and ORVs will not be permitted in historical zones.

### 6.1.4 Natural Environment Zones

Natural environment (NE) zones include natural, cultural, and aesthetic surroundings in which a minimum level of development is required to support low-intensity recreational activities. The majority of recreational uses on the lands, rivers and lakes are accommodated in natural environment zones.

Development is limited to backcountry campsites, portages, trails, signs necessary for route identification, minimal interpretive amenities, and other simple facilities that support low-intensity recreational use (e.g., commercial outpost camp). Angling, hunting, and existing trap lines, baitfish harvesting licences and bear management areas will continue.

Snowmobiling will be permitted to continue on trails and routes designated by the park superintendent. The use of all-terrain vehicles (ATV) or off-road vehicles (ORV) will not be permitted in natural environment zones, unless authorized trail is designated by the park superintendent. Travel by other mechanized means will be limited to existing water routes, roads, or trails, as authorized by the park superintendent. Trails that have a significant negative impact on the environment, harm natural features and values, and/or provide uncontrolled access, will be decommissioned. Existing authorized roads will remain, as per the *Land Use Strategy*.

### 6.1.5 Wilderness Zones

Wilderness (W) zones are landscapes of significant size and integrity which protect natural and cultural values, and support low-density, low-impact backcountry recreation. An important value of Spanish River Valley Provincial Park is its potential to provide a wilderness setting for distinctive visitor experiences. Wilderness, as a value, occurs when a place contains pristine lands and waters, unmarred by roads, development or human disturbance, where natural processes are allowed to function freely, and where travel is by non-mechanized means (OMNR 1992a).

In order to sustain the semi-remote characteristics of the rugged setting of the Spanish River waterway, large tracts of land and water will be managed through wilderness zoning. These zones have a higher level of natural integrity and a minimal level of development. Development in wilderness zones is limited to backcountry campsites, portages, and signs necessary for route identification. The use of snowmobiles, ATVs, and ORVs will not be permitted in wilderness zones, unless authorized by the park superintendent.

### 6.1.6 Nature Reserve Zones

Nature Reserve (NR) zones protect the significant earth and life science features within a park. Most of the sites designated as nature reserve zones in the signature site protect provincially significant representation of old growth forest stands and wetlands. In addition, there may be a need to protect the habitat of floral and faunal species at risk, or species at the limit of their range. Given the significance and sensitivity of natural features contained in a nature reserve zone, very stringent management applies.

Development within nature reserve zones is limited to day use and non-mechanized trails, signs related to natural heritage education, backcountry travel, and temporary facilities for research and management (OMNR 1992a).

Hunting is not permitted in nature reserve zones.

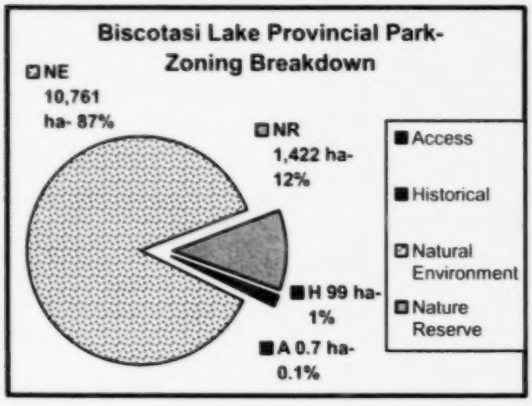
## 6.2 Provincial Parks

A list of permitted resource and recreation activities, according to each provincial park and zone, is provided in Appendix C. These activities are indicative of the resource and recreation uses that are most likely to occur within a particular area. The activities are not all-inclusive and are intended only to provide a quick reference of related activities in a specific area. Those activities not presented in Appendix C are addressed by the general policies within the *Crown Land Use Policy* Atlas. Management direction for the provincial parks will encourage the establishment of partnerships for resource stewardship. Cooperative associations may be established or existing collaborations and associations (e.g., cottagers' association, "Friends" group) will be encouraged to participate.

### 6.2.1 Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park

Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park contains four access zones, two historical zones, one natural environment zone, and four nature reserve zones. There are no development or wilderness zones. Figure 2 illustrates the relative proportion of each zone within the park.

**Figure 2: Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park Zoning**




**Access**

***A1-Biscotasi Lake*** *(0.4 ha)*
This waterway entry point is approximately three kilometres northeast of the hamlet of Biscotasing, where much of the staging of entry into the provincial parks is anticipated to occur. Development of and upgrades to the existing Crown land (public) access point may be necessary, as well as the general maintenance and/or operation of any associated facilities or services. In partnership with the community of Biscotasing, or commercial enterprises, information, parking, and entry permits for Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River provincial parks may be provided in this zone.

***A2-Biscotasi Lake-South*** *(0.1 ha)*
This access zone is used primarily during the winter as an alternative route to gain access to the Spanish River and Biscotasi dams, via a series of frozen lakes and ponds. During the open water seasons, this route allows users to avoid the larger, variable waters and ice of Biscotasi Lake. In the spring and summer, this section can be difficult to navigate as it traverses a low-lying, swampy area.

***A3-Biscotasi Lake Outflow*** *(0.1 ha)*
This entry/exit zone is at the outflow of Biscotasi Lake into the Spanish River, linking to the Spanish River Provincial Park. This allows for upstream entry by paddlers or day users. Camping will be discouraged in the vicinity of the main Biscotasi dams. The outlet dam is under a Licence of Occupation, within the regulated park boundary. The portage connecting the two parks will be managed for visitor safety and dam operation.

***A4-Flying Post Bay North*** *(0.1 ha)*
As part of a traditional canoe route heading north-south towards James Bay, an entry/exit point is located at the mouth of Biscotasi Creek into the north end of Flying Post Bay of Biscotasi Lake.

**Historical**

***H1-Grey Owl Island*** *(43 ha)*
This zone features archaeological sites which are representative of early Shield Archaic use (2,000 years before present). The authorized commercial outpost camp, which the island is named after, is a permitted non-conforming use in this zone.

***Hook Rapids***

***H2-Pansy and Redhouse Islands*** *(56 ha)*
This zone contains several archaeological pre-contact sites. The Pansy and Redhouse islands were also settled from the mid-1800s to the early-1900s.

**Natural Environment**

***NE1-Central Biscotasi Lake*** *(10,761 ha)*
Offering excellent lake-based recreation, due to its many bays and islands, this portion of the lake is semi-remote and offers good angling. Backcountry camping (water access) is permitted on designated campsites only. A small number of recreation camps and private cottages (private land not included in park) occur here as well as one commercial outpost camp.

**Nature Reserves**

***NR1-Central Biscotasi Lake Peninsula*** *(771 ha)*
This area protects large and diverse wetlands, including provincially significant open and treed fens, submersed, emergent, and floating-leafed aquatic marshes, and a cattail marsh. The variety of habitat provides waterfowl and marsh bird breeding and staging areas. Bald eagles, a species at risk, are known to nest on the peninsula. The region also provides moose aquatic feeding areas, along with fish spawning and nursery habitat for northern pike, yellow perch, and various minnows. A significant cranberry thicket and fall feeding area for black bear are noteworthy features of this zone. Cranberry harvesting is not permitted. The use of motorboats is discouraged in order to protect the sensitive features and values of this area.

***NR2-Floating Cattail Marsh*** *(144 ha)*
This nature reserve protects the largest representation of a floating cattail marsh in the signature site. In conjunction with *NR3-Flying Post Bay Marsh* and *NR4-Scarp Creek Marsh*, this is considered to be a provincially significant area and a breeding area for a variety of marsh birds. Bald eagles are also known to nest in this area. The use of motorboats is discouraged due to the sensitivity of features and values in this area. Cranberry harvesting is not permitted.

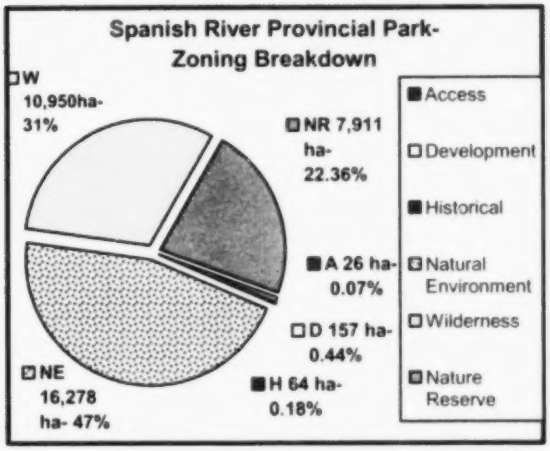
***NR3-Flying Post Bay Marsh*** *(347 ha)*
This zone contains a variety of shoreline wetlands, cattail marshes, graminoid marshes, and several fens. This nature reserve is the most extensive area of submersed aquatic vegetation in the signature site, and is critical fish rearing habitat for warm water species. In conjunction with zones *NR2-Floating Cattail Marsh* and *NR4-Scarp Creek Marsh*, this is considered to be a provincially significant area. The use of motorboats is discouraged in order to protect the sensitive features and values of this area.

***NR4-Scarp Creek Marsh*** *(160 ha)*
This shallow bay contains emergent graminoid marshes and submersed and floating-leafed vegetation. An excellent representation of a breeding area for waterfowl, this feature is also a fish-rearing area. In conjunction with NR2-*Floating Cattail Marsh* and *NR3-Flying Post Bay* Marsh, this is considered to be a provincially significant area. The use of motorboats is discouraged in order to protect the sensitive features and values of this area.

### 6.2.2 Spanish River Provincial Park

Spanish River Provincial Park contains 10 access zones, four development zones, five historical zones, seven natural environment zones, two wilderness zones, and six nature reserve zones. Figure 3 illustrates the relative proportion of each zone within the park.

**Figure 3: Spanish River Provincial Park Zoning**




## Access

***A3-Biscotasi Lake Outflow*** *(0.1ha)*
This entry/exit zone is at the outflow of Biscotasi Lake into the Spanish River, linking to the Spanish River Provincial Park. This zone is at the head of the West Branch of the Spanish River. Camping will be discouraged in the vicinity of the main Biscotasi dams. The portage connecting the two parks will be managed to avoid conflict (e.g., safety and operation) with the dams.

***A5-Sinker Creek*** *(1ha)*
This zone allows water access to the west branch, via the meandering Sinker Creek. Sinker Creek is accessible by rail only.

***A6-Metagama Station*** *(9 ha)*
This zone allows rail access to the west branch, via a trail from Metagama Station to Long Lake. This is the main entry point for clients of several commercial outpost camps. An agreement with the commercial operator to maintain the access trail will continue.

***A7-The Forks*** *(3 ha)*
This very popular rail access point is located one kilometre northwest of the intersection of the west and east branches of the Spanish River.

***A8-The Flume*** *(6 ha)*
Located at the outflow of Pogamasing Creek into the Spanish River, this secondary rail access allows entry into the north end of Pogamasing Lake.

***A9-Pogamasing Creek*** *(5 ha)*
This access zone is located at the mouth of the Pogamasing Creek, which flows eastward into Pogamasing Lake. This is a popular route for accessing the park or travelling west to the Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA.

***A10-Pogamasing Siding*** *(1 ha)*
This zone is a secondary rail access point for recreational users to access the Spanish River.

***A11-Bannerman Creek*** *(0.1 ha)*
Located above Spanish Lake, this waterway is traditionally used as an eastern route towards Onaping Lake. The Bannerman Creek is designated as part of zone *NE5-Main Spanish River and Pogamasing Lake*; however, the permitted and non-permitted uses associated with zone *NR7-Bannerman Creek* apply to any shoreline activities occurring at this location.

***A12-Wakonassin River*** *(0.3 ha)*
This access zone is located where the canoe route from the Wakonassin River enters the park.

***A13-Agnew Lake*** *(1 ha)*
This water access affords anglers and hunters access to the motorized portion of the Spanish River south of the Wakonassin River. Upstream travel by motorized and non-motorized watercraft will be permitted. The staging area for the exit of the river is at Agnew Lake Lodge, located approximately nine kilometres to the south. In partnership with the lodge, information, parking, and permits for Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River provincial parks may be provided at this location. An alternate exit occurs at the public boat launch at Espanola Bay, which is located 12 kilometres to the east.

## Development

***D1-Duke Lake-Crossroads North*** *(38 ha)*
The most popular access point for a variety of recreational pursuits, Duke Lake is road accessible from Highway 144, approximately 30 kilometres south of Gogama. This zone provides day-use and overnight camping to accommodate existing uses (e.g., angling), and paddlers at the beginning of their trip. In partnership with a commercial enterprise,

information, parking, and permits for Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River Provincial Parks may be provided at this location. Aboriginal economic opportunities and associated infrastructure may be developed in this zone.

***D2-First Lake Cabin*** *(19 ha)*
This site is the location of a work centre for park interior crews and compliance staff.

***D3-Sheahan*** *(36 ha)*
This location serves as a rail access point from the VIA Rail Budd Car for recreationists and seasonal residents on Pogamasing Lake. Development at this location will be limited to small-scale projects (e.g., privies, kiosks) to complement the signature site's objectives while considering the interests of the local landowners and users. Aboriginal economic opportunities and associated infrastructure may be developed in this zone. As dumping is prohibited within the signature site, the unauthorized dump site at this location will be removed.

***D4- The Elbow-Crossroads South*** *(64 ha)*
Better known as an exit point, The Elbow provides access to the southern portion of the Spanish River. The access point is found off of the Fox Lake Road, via the Old Cartier Road, which originates in Cartier, approximately 26 kilometres to the east. The site of a former logging camp, this area has long served as an access point to the river. Currently an open field, the area provides trails for hiking, parking and overnight camping. In partnership with a commercial enterprise, information, parking and permits for signature site may be provided at this location. Aboriginal economic opportunities and associated infrastructure may be developed in this zone.

The portions of forest reserve F195 (13 ha) in this zone are addressed in the strategy for the forest reserves (refer to subsection *4.4 Forest* Reserve). Ontario Parks will work with the adjacent land lessee to establish an agreement about the compatible use of land.

**Historical**

***H3-Ninth Lake Pictographs*** *(11 ha)*
This locally significant, water-accessible site contains the only known pictograph on the Spanish River. Ancient woodland art occurs here, and depicts thunderbirds, canoes, and abstract symbols. Rock climbing is not permitted in this zone.

***H4-Pogamasing Gravesite*** *(5 ha)*
This site requires further archaeological assessment, but until then, it will be protected and preserved under Ontario Parks Policy *PM 11.05 Treatment of Human Burial Sites in Provincial Parks* (OMNR 1998).

***H5-Historic Hudson's Bay Post*** *(5 ha)*
Located on Kingston Island in Pogamasing Lake, this site was occupied in the 1800s by the Espaniel family. At that time, Louis Espaniel was chief of the in-land Sagamok Anishnawbek community.

***H6-Historic Wye Townsite and Sawmill*** *(21 ha)*
Located to the south of present-day Sheahan, the community of Wye and the associated sawmill were active here during the late 1920s to the 1940s.

***H7-Eagle Rock*** *(26 ha)*
Of cultural significance to Aboriginal people, this impressive cliff face "guards" the south entrance to the signature site. Rock climbing is not permitted in this zone.

**Natural Environment**

***NE2-Spanish River East Branch*** *(1,967 ha)*
This zone includes the east branch of the Spanish River, from Eleventh Lake to Drive Road Rapids. This stretch offers interconnecting lake-to-lake travel and white-water conditions which are ideal for the novice canoeist. Water-accessible backcountry sites are available for paddlers, motor-boating anglers, and other park users for over-night camping or day-use. Backcountry camping is permitted on designated campsites only. Road access is from Duke Lake, via Highway 144. The waterway also provides access to adjacent Crown land. Aboriginal economic opportunities and associated infrastructure may be developed in this zone.

***NE3-Spanish River West Branch*** *(3,584 ha)*
This zone covers the west branch from the Biscotasi Lake outflow to the alluvial plain in zone *NR5-Meandering Scrolls*. This section is semi-remote, and contains some challenging white-water which requires portaging. Backcountry camping (water access) is

permitted on designated campsites only. Commercial outpost camps are scattered from the Snake River south to Metagama Station. A private recreation camp is located in this zone. The section of the waterway from approximately Dead River to the south end of Lebell Lake is used for motorized angling and hunting. Aboriginal economic opportunities and associated infrastructure may be developed in this zone.

***NE4-Expanse Lake*** *(993 ha)*
This zone encompasses The Forks and Expanse Lake to Upper Athlone Rapids. The Drive Road Rapids provide a natural barrier to downstream motorboat travel. Backcountry camping is permitted on designated campsites only. There is no road access, as water access along the two branches of the Spanish River and rail access at The Forks, are the only entry into this zone. Aboriginal economic opportunities and associated infrastructure may be developed in this zone.

***NE5-Main Spanish River and Pogamasing Lake*** *(8,664 ha)*
This zone encompasses the central portion of the Spanish River, from Athlone Rapids to The Elbow, including the water channel of Bannerman Creek. The Spanish Lake and Bannerman Creek area, up to Onaping Lake and the surrounding area, is a historic water route. There are a number of recreational camps along the Spanish River in this section, which results in a variety of additional activities, such as boating, angling, and hunting.

The primary existing use of the major lakes in the zone (e.g., Pogamasing, Kennedy, and Bluewater) is from cottagers and resource-based tourism. Various land tenures exist here, including private cottages, land use permit recreation camps, commercial outpost camps, and a lodge. To allow for authorized mechanized access for property holders, documented routes will be permitted to continue.

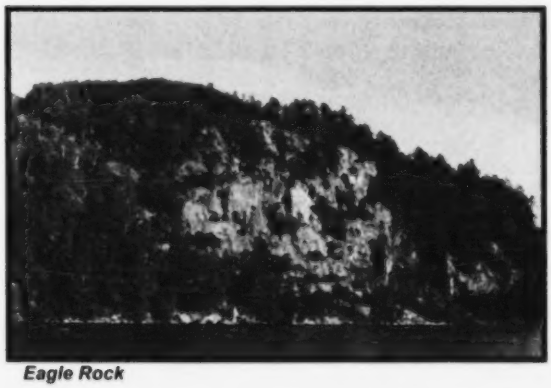
This zone also acts as a crossroads by linking the west and the east canoe routes. The western routes continue into the lakes of the Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA, which provides good flat-water canoeing opportunities on Little Pogamasing and Sinaminda lakes. There is also a backcountry canoe route from Pogamasing Lake through to Kennedy and Bluewater lakes, and Mogo Creek, that presents challenging alternate routes for experienced canoeists. Backcountry camping (water access) is permitted on designated campsites only.

Development at zone *D4-The Elbow-Crossroads South* may include some hiking trails which extend into this zone and also into zone *W2-Cedar Rapids*.

The portions of forest reserve F195 in this zone (82 ha) are addressed in the strategy for the forest reserves (refer to subsection *4.4 Forest* Reserve).

***NE6-The Royal Ride*** *(307 ha)*
This zone includes the channel of the Spanish River from The Elbow, up to and including the waters of the Wakonassin River. The land adjacent to this zone is designated as a wilderness zone (*W2-Graveyard-Cedar Rapids*), with a small portion of another natural environment zone (*NE8-South Spanish River*) in the south. There are visible remnants of log driving structures, such as deflector wings above the Graveyard and Cedar rapids. Sunken log litter can also be found along the river. The use of electric motorboats on the waterway is encouraged. Use is limited by dangerous rapids and swift currents in the spring and low water at other times.

***NE7-Acheson Lake*** *(284 ha)*
This zone encompasses Acheson Lake. There are two land use permit recreation camps, located on the north shore of this semi-remote lake. To allow access to these camps, controlled access by mechanized means on authorized routes will be permitted for existing land holders only.



***Eagle Rock***

***NE8-South Spanish River*** *(474 ha)*
This zone is located at the southern terminus of the provincial park from the Wakonassin River outflow to the inlet of Agnew Lake. This zone offers backcountry camping for paddlers and anglers. Camping is permitted on designated campsites only. Day-use recreational fishing and hunting is popular. Aboriginal economic opportunities and associated infrastructure may be developed in this zone. This zone incorporates the regionally significant lowland hardwood swamp of Coreaux Creek Channel Island. This swamp contains a complex of coniferous and floodplain forest and marshland, providing habitat for waterfowl breeding and fish spawning and nursery.

The forest reserve (4.3 ha) in this zone is being assessed with the intent that portions of the forest reserve in Spanish River Provincial Park may be added to the park or redesignated to general use area or EMA (as appropriate). Section *4.4 Forest Reserve* provides further details on the review process.

## Wilderness

***W1-Tremblay Lake-Mogo Creek*** *(3, 568 ha)*
This zone, located to the south of Pogamasing Lake, is rugged and semi-remote, and includes Franklin and Tremblay lakes. This area provides protection for the regionally significant Tremblay Lake Forest, a diverse upland forest which includes old growth white pine, and several age classes of other tree species, on moderately broken ground moraine and valley train. The headwaters of Franklin and Bluewater lakes, plus Mogo Creek, occur here.

The portion of the forest reserve F195 in this zone (82 ha) is addressed in the strategy for the forest reserves (refer to subsection *4.4 Forest Reserve)*.

The use of motorboats is discouraged in order to protect the sensitive features and values of this area.

***W2-Graveyard - Cedar Rapids*** *(7,381 ha)*
This extremely rugged landscape of hills and cliffs, lined with old growth pine, logging relics, and the legendary Graveyard Rapids, draw modern visitors into its unique history. This wilderness zone protects significant pure red pine stands. The Tofflemire Upland Mature Pine Forest and the Spanish Lake Hardwood Forest, considered regionally significant, are included within this zone. The Tofflemire Upland Mature Pine Forest is a concentration of mature pine on strongly broken ground moraine. The Spanish Lake Hardwood Forest is the best concentration in the signature site of sugar maple, red oak, and yellow birch approaching the northern limit of its range. South of the Graveyard Rapids, there is no development on either side of the Spanish River; it is semi-remote and contains zone *NE6-The Royal Ride*, a 15-kilometre stretch of fast-moving water.

The regionally significant Wakonassin River Delta is at the southern end of the zone. The delta contains an excellent representation of a riverine delta wetland of treeless wet meadow vegetation on gravely valley train deposits, providing areas for waterfowl breeding, and fish spawning and nursery. This delta may be sensitive to disturbance from unrestricted camping, boat landings, and propeller damage.

The use of motorboats is discouraged in order to protect the sensitive features and values of this area. Backcountry camping is permitted on designated sites only. A new hiking trail from zone *D4-the Elbow-Crossroads South* may be considered.

## Nature Reserves

***NR5-Meandering Scrolls*** *(295 ha)*
Also referred to as The Inchworm, this zone contains a strongly meandering section of river, as well as regionally significant backwater ponds which are uncommon for the Canadian Shield. This classic channel is characteristic of an aged river and is atypical of the rest of the Spanish River. The wetlands in this area provide habitat for breeding waterfowl and marsh birds, as well as a fish nursery. The shoreline is naturally erosion-prone and sensitive to further disturbance from camping, watercraft landings, and wakes created by motorboats. The use of motorboats is discouraged in order to protect the sensitive features and values of this area. Due to the sensitivity of the shoreline, visitor education tools (e.g., signs) will be used inform users to refrain from landing on the riverbanks.

***NR6-Pogamasing Esker and Wetland*** *(199 ha)*
This zone, located on Pogamasing Lake, contains a concentration of sensitive natural

heritage values, due to the juxtaposition of esker, wetland, and beach communities. This zone does not include the Lost Channel area, which is within the adjacent natural environment zone. Development of recreation trails will not be permitted, due to sensitive esker slopes and wetlands. The use of motorboats is discouraged in order to protect the sensitive features and values of this area.

***NR7-Bannerman Creek*** *(158 ha)*
This zone contains a meandering stream, riparian wetlands, and a floodplain forest. The extensive natural levee is an uncommon feature in this part of Ontario. The wetlands provide waterfowl breeding habitat, as well as fish spawning and nursery areas for northern pike, yellow perch, and various minnows. The use of motorboats is discouraged in order to protect the sensitive features and values of this area. Due to the sensitivity of the shoreline, visitor education tools (e.g., signs) will inform users to refrain from landing watercraft the on shore.

***NR8-Agnes River Old Growth Pine*** *(4,918 ha)*
This zone encompasses two provincially significant natural heritage areas: Agnes River Old Pine Forest and Craig-Tofflemire Old Pine Forest. The Agnes River Old Pine Forest is the best example of old-growth white pine and red pine forest on a glaciofluvial valley train landform, and esker-kettle contact features (Crins 1996). The Craig-Tofflemire Old Pine Forest, in association with other conifers, is a provincially significant example of old growth white pine on an end moraine landform. Recent field work has identified relatively pure red pine stands on moderately broken ground moraine. The area includes a portion of the headwaters for Mogo Creek, Agnes River and the Spanish River system.

The use of motorboats is discouraged in order to protect the sensitive features and values of this area.

The portion of the forest reserve (F195) in this zone (16 ha) is addressed in the strategy for the forest reserves (refer to subsection *4.4 Forest Reserve)*.

***NR9-Spanish River Valley Old Pine*** *(1,971 ha)*
The largest contiguous concentration of old growth white pine forest in the ecoregion occurs in this zone. This zone also protects a portion of the headwaters of Acheson Lake and the Spanish River. The use of motorboats is discouraged in order to protect the sensitive features and values of this area.

***NR10-Lower Reynolds Creek*** *(371 ha)*
This zone protects the Reynolds Creek area from Agnes Lake to the Spanish River, including a provincially significant ice contact delta feature that is located at the outlet of Reynolds Creek (O'Leary 2002). Old growth white and red pine forest is well represented here. The use of motorboats is discouraged in order to protect the sensitive features and values of this area.

## 6.3 Enhanced Management Areas

Three EMAs form nearly 51,000 hectares of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site: Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area, Acheson Lake and Ishpodnok EMAs. Management of these areas will give careful consideration to their semi-remote nature, and resource-based tourism and recreation values. The management of the EMAs will be led by the Sudbury District Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), with direction from Ontario Parks and the approved management plan. Management will support the guiding principles of the signature site.

Forestry, mining, aggregate extraction, and hydroelectric development may occur in recreation and remote access EMAs.

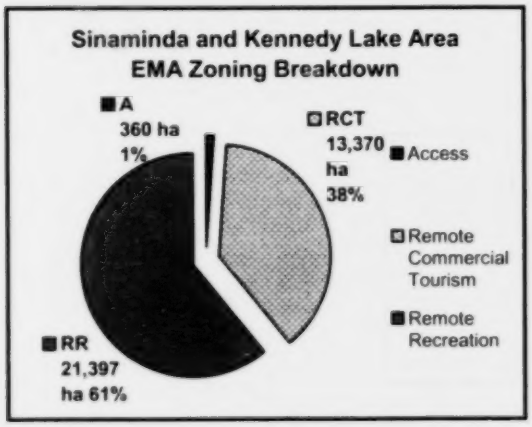
Management direction for the EMA will encourage the establishment of partnerships for resource stewardship. Cooperative associations may be established and/or existing collaborations and associations (e.g., cottagers' association, Friends of the Spanish River), will be encouraged to participate.

***Meandering Scrolls on the West Branch***

### 6.3.1 Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area Enhanced Management Area

Direction from the *Land Use Strategy* suggests that this recreation class EMA will be zoned to effectively manage a wide range of activities. To accommodate the variety of existing uses in this EMA, the area has been divided into three zones: access, remote commercial tourism, and remote recreation. Figure 4 illustrates the size of each zone within the EMA. The intent of the zones, proposed in the *Spanish River Valley Signature Site Management Options* (OMNR 2004c) document, is to sustain and enhance the recreational value of the Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA. Future forest management planning will be in accordance with direction stated in the approved *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management Plan*.

**Figure 4: Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA Zoning**




***Access Zone*** *(360 ha)*
This zone encompasses the south end of the EMA, including the access point on Sinaminda Lake. In order for the EMA to remain semi-remote, this zone will serve as the only public motorized road access into the EMA. The road and access point will be maintained, subject to funding.

***Remote Commercial Tourism Zone*** *(13,370 ha)*
This zone defines the central portion of the EMA and includes the six designated tourism lakes: Little Pogamasing, Piano, Squirrel, Alton, Mile and Gilden lakes. The intent of this designation is to protect the remote commercial tourism of these lakes by limiting motorized public access (see subsection *7.2.3 Commercial Tourism in the Signature Site*).

No motorized public access will be permitted in this zone. Timber management guidelines for remote based tourism will also apply.

***Remote Recreation Zone*** *(21,397 ha)*
This zone delineates the eastern and north-western portions of the EMA. The intent of this designation is to enhance non-mechanized backcountry opportunities by discouraging public motorized travel, and promoting established canoe routes. This effectively contributes to controlling entry into the adjacent Spanish River Provincial Park.

### 6.3.2 Acheson Lake and Ishpodnok Enhanced Management Areas

#### Acheson Lake

Acheson Lake EMA, categorized as a remote access area contains old growth red and white pine. Numerous micro-watersheds feed the Spanish River from this area. Forestry, recreational camps, hunting, and trapping are the main uses of this area. The EMA also contains late winter moose habitat, and provides an excellent buffer for significant natural features contained in the Spanish River Provincial Park. The intent of this designation is to sustain the relatively remote character by prohibiting the creation of any future public road access into the area.

#### Ishpodnok

Ishpodnok EMA, formerly called Swann Lake EMA, is categorized as a remote access area. This EMA provides semi-remote hunting and fishing opportunities, due to its semi-roadless nature. Portions of this area are currently managed as "limited access areas" under the *2005-2025 Northshore Forest Management Plan* (Northshore Forest Inc. 2005) and an adjustment to the *Espanola District Land Use Guidelines* (1983b). amendment number 95-0001. This amendment states that "traditional uses such as hiking, camping, canoeing, hunting, angling, trapping, wildlife viewing, etc.,

will be encouraged." Timber extraction, mineral exploration, mining, and aggregate extraction activities may be permitted, provided that long-term, all season or year-round public access is not improved. The EMA contains an abundant moose population, and trout lakes.

## 7.0 RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP POLICIES

The provincial parks within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site will be managed in accordance with Ontario Parks' policies and pertinent legislation. The enhanced management areas (EMAs) will be managed to complement and support the protection of remote recreational and natural values of the adjacent Spanish River Provincial Park. The following policies and legislation form the foundation for resource stewardship within the signature site:

- *Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies* and park policies, procedures, and guidelines
- *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (OMNR 1999), and policy clarification statements for provincial parks
- *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas*
- *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Royal Assent received on June 20, 2006 and proclamation pending)*
- *Public Lands Act*
- *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*
- *Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act* (1990)
- *Endangered Species Act* (1990)
- *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (1997)
- *Ontario Heritage Act* (1990)
- *Environmental Assessment Act*
- *Environmental Bill of Rights* (1994)
- *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves*
- *A Class Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development*
- *Declaration Order regarding MNR's Class Environmental Assessment Approval for Forest Management on Crown Lands in Ontario*
- *Protecting What Sustains Us: Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy*

Other relevant legislation, policy and direction will apply as appropriate. The provisions in the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site Management Plan, once approved and released, will replace the *Spanish River Special Area Plan* and parts of the *Biscotasi Local Area Land Use Strategy* amendment to the *Chapleau District Land Use Guidelines* and the *Gogama District Land Use Guidelines*, and will give direction for forest management planning.

Public consultation has also been important in determining what should be considered in resource stewardship. The general public, adjacent landowners, Aboriginal communities, Crown land users, and others, were encouraged to identify their interests during the earlier stages of this planning process; their input has been carefully considered.

The following section outlines the resource stewardship policies for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. These policies will ensure that the overall objectives for the site are achieved. Where appropriate, the resource stewardship policy statements have been divided into parks and EMAs in order to differentiate the policies between the two land use designations, and to expand on specific management direction for each.

Implementation projects and future amendments to resource stewardship will require screening under *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves*, and/or the *Declaration Order regarding MNR's Class Environmental Assessment Approval for Forest Management on Crown Lands in Ontario*, and/or *A Class Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development*, and will follow applicable public consultation processes.

### 7.1 Aboriginal Interests

The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site is located within the 1850 Robinson-Huron Treaty Area. First Nation communities have expressed interest in and have shared knowledge of the signature site and surrounding area. Traditional Aboriginal uses of the signature site will continue to be

allowed. The use of resources by Aboriginal people for subsistence and ceremonial purposes will continue within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site, subject to public safety, conservation, and other considerations.

## 7.2 Land Management

Management of the signature site's land base will be directed towards maintaining the natural landscape; protecting genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity; and conserving ecological integrity. The terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity of the signature site will continue to be documented through inventories, assessment, and research.

### 7.2.1 Private Land Disposition

The sale or disposition of new lands for the private use (i.e., recreation camp or cottage) of individuals or corporations will not be permitted within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. If any landowner wishes to sell their land, MNR/Ontario Parks may consider purchase of the land, and/or improvements on a willing seller/willing buyer basis.

### 7.2.2 Land Use Permits

Existing authorized land use permits for recreation camps are permitted to continue, and may be eligible for enhanced tenure, but not the purchase of land. Enhanced tenure, is defined as a possible extension of the term of the land use permit for recreation camps, up to 10 years or an upgrade in tenure (i.e., land use permit to lease) (OMNR 2000).

Enhanced tenure for a land use permit for a recreation camp is not guaranteed. Requests for enhanced tenure, or to transfer recreation camps, will be reviewed based upon the following criteria:

- Continued compliance with the conditions of the land use permits for recreation camps
- Current land disposition policies for land use permits
- Consistency with park objectives to protect the semi-remote values of the signature site (i.e., no negative effects on features and values, and/or conflicts with other uses)
- All rents, taxes, fees, rates, and/or charges are paid and in good standing.

An extension in the term of tenure for an existing private recreation camp land use permit does not convey a commitment to provide for a change in the type or the standard of existing access to the private recreation camp.

No new land use permits will be issued for private recreation camps in Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River provincial parks. Should a land use permit for a private recreation camp revert to the Crown, it will not be reissued. Requests to transfer private recreation camps under land use permit will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

### 7.2.3 Commercial Tourism

Existing commercial tourism facilities may continue within the signature site. Existing authorized commercial land use permits may also continue to be renewed for commercial tourism purposes, if the terms, conditions, and intent of the permits are being met. Commercial tourism establishments that have tenure by land use permit may be eligible for enhanced tenure (e.g., lease), but not for purchase. Transfer of existing commercial tourism facilities will be permitted.

Within the signature site, there is potential for Aboriginal economic opportunities. Activities such as a guided service for visitors, and associated infrastructure requirements, may be developed.

A number of features and values have been identified as key attributes of the signature site. These significant attributes were evaluated to determine if additional tourism development is warranted at this time. These natural, cultural, and recreational features include:

- Self-sustaining native fisheries and wildlife, with original species diversity and populations
- Sensitive biological features, including river meandering scrolls, delta, and wetlands

- Representative geological and biological features (e.g., glacial delta, eskers, old growth, species at risk, etc.)
- Existing commercial tourism development and previous planning direction to sustain these operations
- Archaeological and cultural heritage features
- Existing canoe routes
- Existing, but limited, development.

Values of the signature site include:

- Existing limited access and remoteness (relative to the region and province)
- Quality visitor experiences
- Aesthetics and low levels of development and use (i.e., wilderness values).

After consideration of the above features and values, especially semi-remote wilderness recreation, and natural and cultural heritage values, the project team assessed the capacity of the signature site to sustain existing and new commercial tourism. Some of the opportunities, addressed below, include the possibility of new operations or the expansion of existing services through partnerships. Opportunities may include:

- Ontario Parks permit and merchandise sales by local commercial establishments
- Aboriginal economic opportunities
- Historic Log Drive Pointer Boat Tour
- Historic Budd Car access with VIA Rail.

These opportunities may include the disposition of land use permits for commercial operations only and will take into account the semi-remote values of the signature site. Proposals that promote non-consumptive activities such as wildlife viewing, swimming, canoeing, and cultural heritage appreciation may be considered. New commercial facilities that are in keeping with the semi-remote nature of the signature site may be encouraged.

Within the Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA, new commercial operations, under a land use permit authority on Gilden Lake, may be considered. Future consideration may also be given to small-scale commercial services which may enhance the semi-remote recreational opportunities, and commercial tourism values, of the area.

On the designated tourism lakes (Little Pogamasing, Piano, Squirrel, Alton, Mile, and Gilden), the following minimum conditions to forest management will apply:

- 120 metre (from waters edge) no cut reserve
- 1,000 metre viewscape (from waters edge)
- 400 metre no-road zone from the lake.

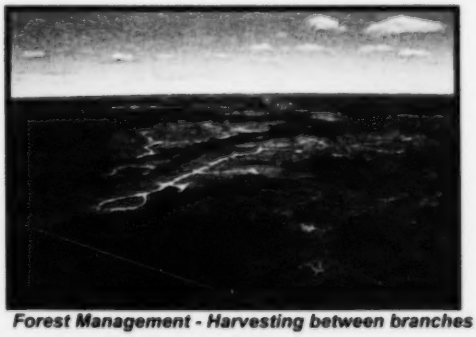
These conditions will be implemented through the forest management planning process.

## 7.3 Industrial and Commercial Uses

Commercial timber harvesting, mining, or mineral exploration, and commercial electrical power generation (e.g., hydroelectric and wind power) development, are not permitted within Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River provincial parks. Forest management activities, mining or mineral exploration, and commercial electrical power generation (e.g., hydroelectric and wind power) development are permitted within the EMAs. The disposition of land for the purposes of agriculture, and rural residential or urban development, will not be permitted.

Forest management activities will consider the semi-remote character of the area and appropriate conditions may be implemented during and after operations (see section *7.4 Forest Management*).

Proposals for new energy transmission, travel, and communications corridors will be reviewed and commented on, in accordance with the appropriate environmental assessment requirements.



***Forest Management - Harvesting between branches***

### 7.3.1 Mining and Mineral Exploration

The Spanish River Forest Reserve (F192) has existing mining tenure. Mineral exploration, mining and related access is permitted to continue within the forest reserve. Mineral exploration and mining are not permitted within provincial parks. Access to existing mining lands contained within the park is permitted, with appropriate consideration for the protection for park features and values.

Aggregate extraction and mineral exploration and development may continue within the EMAs, provided that the related industrial activity, including new road construction, is carried out in such a way as to protect or enhance the semi-remote quality of the area. Work permits for new roads, trails, or water crossings will contain specific provisions in this regard. Conditions for the protection of provincial park values, forestry activities, remote-based tourism, and important fish and wildlife habitat may be considered in aggregate permit and licence applications. Aggregate extraction around Sinaminda Lake will be limited to construction of local forest access roads (refer to section *8.1.2 Roads*). New commercial quarry operations will not be permitted in Straleck Township.

Guidelines for mineral exploration activities in EMAs have been developed by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM) to support the conservation of recreational and natural values in EMAs. These guidelines, provided in Appendix D, will be encouraged for all mineral exploration and development in the EMAs.

### 7.3.2 Forest Management

Forest harvesting and renewal activities are not permitted within the provincial parks. Policies and guidelines regarding forest access roads and bridges are discussed further in sections *8.1.2 Roads* and *8.2 Metagama Road Water Crossings*.

Forest management will continue within the EMAs as per the approved Spanish Forest and Northshore Forest forest management plans (FMP). MNR/Ontario Parks will provide input into the forest management planning process, including reviewing Annual Work Schedules (AWS), to protect remoteness, viewscapes, etc., and to identify other related values and the necessary forest management practices required to sustain the ecological integrity of the signature site.

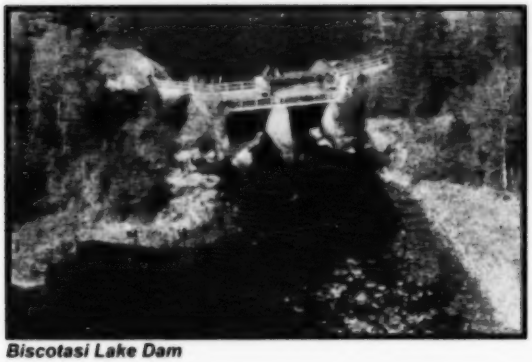
The *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management Plan*, and the associated *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas* policy reports, will provide management direction for forest practices in the EMAs.

A viewscape will be applied to the Spanish River Provincial Park shoreline. The viewscape will be modeled to 1,000 metres from the water's edge during forest management planning. In order to protect important recreational values, a 1,000 metre viewscape and 120 metre reserve from the water's edge will also be applied to the section of Snake River that connects the west and east branches of the Spanish River.

The Sustainable Forest License (SFL) holders, Ontario Parks, and MNR Sudbury District will examine the impacts of forestry operations on the features and values of the signature site (e.g., recreation, access, cultural features, research, etc.). The impacts which will be looked at include, but will not be limited to, the timing of operations around campsites, and forest access roads adjacent to the park. The management plan will continue to provide direction to adjacent forest management planning (e.g., timing of operations and no-road zoning).

### 7.3.3 Water Control Structures

The entire Spanish River is 260 km in length. There are 13 controlled lakes on the system. Five water control structures are located within the signature site. The managed release of water over the summer months supplements low summer flows, giving the Spanish River higher-than-normal summer water levels (INCO Ltd., E.B. Forest Products, and OMNR 1989). This benefits summer recreational activities such as canoeing but, pending the timing of dam openings and closings, these structures can seriously affect fish spawning habitat in the headwater lakes.



***Biscotasi Lake Dam***

## Existing Structures

Existing water control structures will continue as a non-conforming use within the provincial parks. Operation and maintenance of these structures will be in accordance with the completed *Spanish/Vermilion Rivers Water Management Plan*, with an emphasis placed on meeting the signature site's objectives.

The replacement, rehabilitation, or decommissioning of existing water control structures is the responsibility of the control structure owners (as detailed in the rest of this subsection), who will adhere to provincial requirements and approvals under relevant sections of the *Public Lands Act*, *Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act*, and the *Environmental Assessment Act*. Either *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves*, or *A Class Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development*, will be applied to structures operated by MNR and to non-MNR structures on Crown land. All projects will be subject to the review and approval by the appropriate federal agencies.

Through the water management planning process, operators will be encouraged to establish new installations to monitor and provide current information on outflow volumes from structures for recreational users (e.g., cubic metres per second for canoeists).

### Biscotasi Lake Dams (1, 2, and 3)

INCO Ltd. holds a Licence of Occupation (#8802; c.1920) for the flooding rights of the Biscotasi-chain of lakes (Biscotasi, Ramsey, Indian, Bardney, and Frechette) and, as such, has three control dams located within Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park: two at the outflow to the West Branch of the Spanish River and one at the outlet of the Dead River. Flow is regulated by INCO Ltd. for downstream hydroelectric operations.

The Biscotasi Lake watershed is approximately 560 $km^2$ (216 $mi^2$) in area, while the lake surface area is approximately 60 $km^2$ (23.0 $mi^2$). Dam 1 is located at the outlet of Biscotasi Lake where it flows into the west branch. This dam is a concrete gravity structure which was reconstructed in 1917. The lake is used by outpost camp operators, tourist outfitters, and a number of cottage owners. Dam 2, situated near Dam 1, is an earthen dam at the outflow into the west branch of the Spanish River. This dam was reconstructed in 1936. Dam 3, also an earthen dam, is located at the outflow into the Dead River. A concrete sluice was added to this dam in 1936.

### Pogamasing Lake Dam

Domtar Inc. holds a License of Occupation (#9112; c. 1943) for the flooding rights to Pogamasing Lake. Water levels are controlled for hydroelectric operations in the lower watershed.

The Pogamasing Dam drainage area is 181.3 square kilometres (70 square miles), and it has a lake area of 15.5 $km^2$ (6 $mi^2$). The Pogamasing Lake Dam is located in Morse Township. Pogamasing Lake runs in a north-south direction, and is situated just south of Spanish River Forks, one kilometre west of the Spanish River. The dam, a reinforced concrete structure built in 1925, is situated in the central portion of the lake, on the lake's east side. The outlet flows through a series of rapids within Pogamasing Creek into the Spanish River, just below the CPR Rail crossing.

### Sinaminda Lake Dam

Domtar Inc. holds a License of Occupation (#6428; c. 1925) for the flooding rights to Sinaminda Lake. The Sinaminda Lake Dam is located at the southern tip of Sinaminda Lake, in Gilbert Township. The lake's principal outlet is the Agnes River, which flows into the Upper Spanish River. Built in 1948 as an earth-filled timber crib dam, the original purpose of the dam was for water impoundment. The impoundment area of this dam is 1,472 ha (3,635.2 a). The lake area is 16.05 $km^2$ (6.2 $mi^2$).

Sinaminda Lake has a lake trout, walleye, and pike fishery. The control schedule is based on the spawning seasons for pike and lake trout. During these times the lake level should be kept at a constant level. From January to March, the level should remain at approximately 29m (94ft), and during April the level should be allowed to rise.

### New Structures

New hydro-electric development is not permitted within Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River provincial parks. The construction of water control structures which may help to enhance or protect park values may be considered.

The development of new hydro-electric projects in the EMAs is permitted, with the appropriate consideration of the goals and objectives of the signature site preliminary management plan. Development of new sites will proceed under the *Waterpower Site Release and Development Policy* (OMNR 2004g).

## 7.4 Vegetation Management

A vegetation strategy may be prepared for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site, following the approval of the final management plan. The vegetation strategy will be directed towards managing the natural succession of vegetation communities within the parks, and the sustainable management of forest resources within the EMAs.

The commercial harvesting of non-timber forest products (e.g., Canada yew and blueberries) is not permitted within the provincial parks, but may continue within the EMAs, subject to appropriate permits and conditions.

The removal of hazardous trees will be permitted in all zones where safety is a concern (e.g., authorized trails, access points). Areas that require rehabilitation, such as abandoned roads, may be restored using native species.

Herbicide applications are discouraged for vegetation management. Ontario Parks and MNR district staff will have discussions with VIA Rail and SFL holders regarding the management requirements for the control of brush and other vegetation along the railway, and forest access roadway corridors, respectively, to help with the protection of the signature site's values.

### 7.4.1 Insect and Disease Control

The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site will be maintained in as natural a state as possible. Insect and disease control measures may be considered if the identified features and/or values of the signature site are threatened. Infestations by forest insects and diseases may be monitored and assessed. The use of potential control measures will be outlined in the vegetation strategy for the signature site. Biological controls will be used wherever possible.

Until the vegetation strategy is approved, emergency measures may be considered to protect the signature site's features and values. Such measures would be subject to the approval of the appropriate Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) district manager, and/or the park superintendent.

### 7.4.2 Fuelwood Harvesting for Personal Use

For authorized land use permit holders, fuelwood may be required for heating and cooking. Although fuelwood cutting is not permitted in existing provincial parks, there is an exception to this restriction in new parks established under the *Land Use Strategy*. Where an authorized fuelwood cutting permit has been continuously maintained, prior to the approval of the *Land Use Strategy*, fuel wood cutting is permitted (OMNR 2000). This policy applies to properties where there is no road access. In recognition of the historical practice of cutting fuelwood for personal use by authorized landholders, the provision for this practice will be negotiated with fees for permits in designated areas (preferably natural environment zones) on a case-by-case basis. Permits for fuelwood cutting within the EMAs will continue to be administered by the appropriate MNR district through the forest management planning process.

### 7.4.3 Fire Management

MNR recognizes fire as an essential ecosystem process which is fundamental to maintaining and restoring the ecological integrity of

protected areas in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence and Boreal Forest Regions. Ontario Parks will undertake fire management planning in co-operation with MNR's Forest Fire Management program, to determine the best approaches to fire management of the provincial parks. Fire management for the EMAs will continue as per the *Forest Fire Management Strategy for Ontario* (OMNR 2004d). A fire management plan would identify management objectives, protection priorities, the potential use of prescribed burning, and fire response activities. Fire management planning will advance the use of fire to meet ecosystem management objectives, while ensuring an appropriate response to forest fires to prevent personal injury, value loss, and social disruption. This plan will examine the historical role of fire in the eco-district, and its potentially beneficial effects, particularly for forest succession and the rejuvenation of white pine. In the absence of an approved fire management plan, fire will be managed as on adjacent lands, as directed by the *Forest Fire Management Strategy for Ontario* within the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence fire management zone. Fires that threaten park visitor safety or park infrastructure will receive full response and sustained action until extinguished. Other fires can be considered for modified response, through consultation between the park superintendent, and the fire management supervisor or duty officer.

Wherever feasible, "light on the land" fire suppression techniques, which do not unduly disturb the landscape, may be used to protect sensitive features within the site. Examples of these techniques may include limiting the use of heavy equipment and foam retardant, as well as limiting the number of trees felled during fire response efforts. Prescribed burning may be used and will be subject to MNR policies and guidelines in order to achieve ecosystem management or hazard reduction concerns.

## 7.5 Wildlife Management

The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site lies within Wildlife Management Units (WMU) 37, 38, and 39. Wildlife within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site will be managed on a sustainable basis, in accordance with current policies, procedures, regulations and legislation, such as the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, Migratory Birds Convention Act* (1994), and *Ontario's Wildlife Management Manual* (OMNR 2004e). Wildlife management will be directed towards the maintenance and/or enhancement of diverse and healthy populations. Table 3 lists the variety of species that may be found within the signature site (North-South Environmental Inc. 2001). Wildlife habitat management issues will be addressed through the management of vegetation communities.

**Table 3: Species Numbers in Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River Provincial Parks.**

| Group | # of species |
|---|---|
| Non-Vascular Plants and Lichens | ≥58 |
| Vascular Plants | ≥309 |
| Breeding Birds | ≤133 |
| Mammals | ≤56 |
| Reptiles and Amphibians | ≤25 |
| Fish | unknown |

Protected areas throughout Ontario are subject to a variety of internal and external stresses which range from the number of hikers and campers within a protected area, to agricultural and forestry activities on adjacent lands, to the effects of climate change across the greater landscape. Habitat loss, alteration, and fragmentation directly affect the species that rely on natural ecosystems. The cumulative impact of a series of seemingly small habitat losses can be significant (OMNR 2005b). The protection of biological diversity, including genes, species, and ecosystems, can be further addressed in implementation strategies (e.g., vegetation strategy, fisheries strategy), including direction for monitoring, reporting, and adaptive management.

People in the signature site are interacting with important wildlife habitat. Measures will be taken to inform visitors of risks and impacts of travel and camping in the area (e.g., garbage removal, can and glass bottle ban, "Bear Wise" practices). Sign posting and the closure of areas may be necessary to reduce negative human-wildlife interactions (OMNR 2004f). Animals may be trapped and relocated under the supervision of the park superintendent or MNR area supervisor. These animal control measures may be exercised only when it is essential for the protection of human health and safety, the health of the animal and/or the species, or the protection of infrastructure. As a last resort, animals may be destroyed when

human health and safety is at risk, or when humane issues are a concern (e.g., wounded animal).

### 7.5.1 Hunting

Hunting in the signature site for both small and large game is subject to provincial hunting regulations for the respective WMU. Hunting, including commercial bear hunting, will be permitted within wilderness and natural environment zones and in the EMAs. Hunting is subject to sustainable wildlife management practices, zoning and management prescriptions, and Ontario hunting regulations. Opportunities for remote hunting experiences will be encouraged and enhanced where appropriate.

Subject to ecological considerations and implementation planning for the signature site, relocation of existing trails and cabins may be necessary, and may be evaluated by Ontario Parks and MNR districts and through consultation with the affected commercial harvest operators.

**Provincial Parks**

Hunting will be discontinued within all nature reserve zones, development zones, and access zones (refer to section *6.0 Zoning*). Hunting will be restricted in these areas once approved in the final signature site management plan. Maps and other information on hunting in the provincial parks will be provided by the park superintendent, upon request.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

Hunting within the EMAs will be permitted. The use of existing trails associated with hunting may be permitted to continue; however, the establishment of new trails will not be permitted. The transient use of off-road vehicles (ORVs) and all-terrain vehicles (ATV) (e.g., for the direct retrieval of game) is permitted to continue within the EMA at the current level of use, and will be further defined in the access strategy. Should this use increase or begin to degrade the landscape or values which the EMA designation protects (e.g., remote recreational and commercial opportunities), this use may need to be revaluated and amendments may be made to the access strategy.

### 7.5.2 Bear Management Areas

Portions of 20 authorized bear management areas are contained within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. The operation of these existing bear management areas is permitted to continue, except for those portions that are in nature reserve zones, where hunting is not permitted. These portions, totalling approximately 4,878 hectares in size, will be removed from the respective bear management area after the *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Management Plan* is approved.

MNR district offices will notify their respective bear management area operators of any potential loss of harvesting opportunities due to the designation of nature reserve zones. The bear management area boundaries will be re-regulated, and the licence fees will be adjusted accordingly. Ontario Parks will work with MNR districts and authorized bear management area holders to address potential conflicts with other recreation uses (e.g., bearbaiting setbacks from all campsites and portages) as a condition of licensed bear management areas within the signature site.

The transfer of bear management areas may be permitted if the current operator sells their bear hunting business to another operator, and if the bear management area transfer is approved by the appropriate MNR district and Ontario Parks. If an operator surrenders a bear management area or if it is revoked, reallocation of the bear management area may occur following existing screening processes. Applications for renewal or transfer will be assessed with consideration for conservation principles and public safety.

### 7.5.3 Trapping

Trapping within the signature site is subject to trapping regulations for the respective WMU. There are portions of 25 active, registered trap lines within the site.

Existing trapping activities will be permitted to continue in all zones of the provincial parks and EMAs. Authorized trap cabins associated with registered trap lines are also permitted to continue.

The transfer of existing trapping licences and permits may be permitted, subject to review and approval by MNR districts/Ontario Parks, and following established allocation procedures. Trapline cabins are considered to be part of the trapline, and would also be considered for transfer with the trapline.

New trapline operations, which include trap line cabins and trails, will not be permitted within the provincial parks. New trapline operations may be permitted in the EMAs, subject to MNR policies.

## 7.6 Aquatic Ecosystems Management

Aquatic resources, including fisheries, are abundant within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. These resources are protected under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*. Fishing is one of the most common activities of visitors to the signature site. The *Fisheries Act* (1985) and pursuant provincial fisheries regulations govern fishing throughout the site.

### 7.6.1 Water Management

The current *Spanish/Vermilion Rivers Water Management Plan* (INCO Ltd. and E.B. Eddy Forest Products 1993) currently outlines a set of rule curves which are operational guidelines to complement hydro production and effluent assimilation. An updated *Spanish/Vermilion Rivers Water Management Plan* is being developed according to the *Water Management Planning Guidelines for Waterpower* (OMNR 2002c), which will identify operational limits (maximum and minimum water levels, minimum flows). The main goal of this plan is to balance user needs on the watershed by addressing, where possible, the following general concerns:

- Flood damage reduction
- Fish habitat protection and life history requirements
- Existing hydro-electric power generation
- Minimum flows
- Lake level regulation on reservoirs and storage lakes for cottage owners
- Flow regulation for recreational use
- Shoreline erosion.

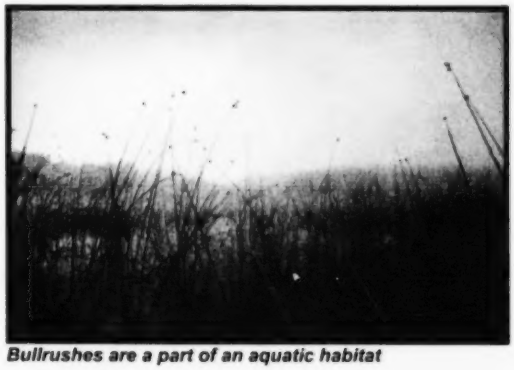
Specific issues and concerns that need to be considered during the development of the *Spanish/Vermilion Rivers Water Management Plan* include:

- Lake level requirements on Biscotasi Lake for recreational navigation
- Water level requirements to maintain healthy wetlands on Biscotasi Lake, and the fish and wildlife which are dependent on them
- Recreational flow requirements for paddlers from Biscotasi Lake downstream to Agnew Lake
- The effects of regulated flows from Onaping Lake on the zone *NR7-Bannerman Creek*
- Consideration of the effects of water levels and flows on identified species at risk in the signature site
- General maintenance of aquatic ecosystem health through the implementation of adequate flows.

Additional information may be required in order to effectively address aquatic ecosystem concerns, and enhance recreational experiences, where feasible. This will provide the water management planning team with sufficient data to evaluate the proposed options developed to address the specified issues.

### 7.6.2 Fisheries Management

The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site will be managed to protect healthy aquatic ecosystems, including the maintenance, and/or enhancement of a self-sustaining fishery (e.g., lake trout, brook trout, and walleye).



***Bullrushes are a part of an aquatic habitat***

A fisheries strategy may be prepared for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site and will involve public consultation.

Non-native species will not knowingly be introduced to the signature site. Visitors will be discouraged from bringing non-native species into the area.

The restoration of signature site fisheries and aquatic habitats may be undertaken, where appropriate. Any decisions regarding fisheries management (e.g., stocking, season changes, sanctuaries, and ice fishing restrictions) will be undertaken in conjunction with relevant MNR district staff, and will be subject to *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves*, and/or *A Class Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development*. The signature site management plan will be consistent with all applicable fisheries management direction, such as district fisheries management plans, the *Northeast Region Fisheries Action Plan "Responding to Client Needs"* (Finucan, McGovern, Dayne and Dunlop 2000), and the *Strategic Plan for Ontario Fisheries (SPOF II): An Aquatic Ecosystem Approach to Managing Fisheries* (OMNR 1992c). If deemed necessary to protect fishery values, fishing regulations may be developed for selected lakes within the signature site, in consultation with appropriate MNR district staff.

### Trout Lakes

Self-sustaining lake trout lakes within the provincial parks include: Acheson, Bluewater, Kennedy, Lebell, Pogamasing, and Telephone lakes. Self-sustaining lake trout lakes within the EMAs include: Bagpipe, Big Squaw, Little Squaw, Dennie, Little Dennie, Little Pogamasing, Squirrel, Sinaminda, McGuey, and Kerr lakes.

Fishery conditions related to forest management planning will continue as follows:

- Lakes will be managed exclusively for lake trout.
- No additional access or development will be permitted within 400 metres of lakes.
- A 120 metre Area of Concern (AOC) will be applied.
- Forest management activities in the EMAs may be permitted within the AOC, subject to concerns for erosion, sedimentation, access, and protection of lake trout habitat.

Additional protection measures will be given to identified, self-sustaining brook trout lakes and rivers in the EMAs.

### Sport Fishing

Sport fishing is permitted to continue within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site, in compliance with relevant provincial fishing regulations.

### Fish Stocking

Any fish stocking will be in accordance with *Guidelines for Stocking Fish in Inland Waters of Ontario* (OMNR 2002d), and district policies and guidelines.

### Commercial Fishing

There are no existing commercial fishing licences within the signature site. No new operations will be permitted.

### Baitfish Harvesting

#### Provincial Parks

Baitfish harvesting will continue under existing restrictions, as described within the provincial fisheries regulations, to reduce the risk of accidental species introductions. Existing licences are permitted to continue in the provincial parks, subject to the conditions specified on the licence. New bait harvesting licences will not be permitted in the provincial parks; however, active licences may be transferred, where bait harvesting is an established permitted use. The transfer of existing licences and permits may be permitted, subject to review and approval by MNR districts/Ontario Parks, and following established allocation procedures.

#### Enhanced Management Areas

Baitfish harvesting operations and licensing will continue within the EMAs, similar to that on surrounding Crown land.

***Bull Moose (Alces alces)***

### 7.6.3 Water Quality

The approved *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management Plan* help to prevent the degradation of water quality which may occur as a result of tourism, and recreational or industrial development in the signature site.

Pollution in the signature site (e.g., headwater contamination by motorboats) has the potential to disrupt ecological processes, at the source of pollution and downstream. Ecosystem contamination can contribute to health problems in both people and wildlife, at individual and population levels (OMNR 2005b). Water quality in the signature site may be monitored and, if it is determined that a harmful level of pollution exists, measures will be taken to minimize water contamination.

The establishment of privies, authorized dumps (off-site), and litter restrictions will assist in the control of human waste issues within the provincial parks (see section *8.0 Operations*). Waste management facilities and restrictions will not be implemented in the EMAs. Unauthorized refuse disposal on Crown land will remain an offence under the *Public Lands Act*.

## 7.7 Non-Native and Invasive Species

A non-native or alien species is one that has been introduced to an ecosystem either accidentally or intentionally (OMNR 2005b). These species may originate in other continents or countries, or from other parts of Ontario and/or Canada.

Non-native species that present a threat to the environment, economy, and/or society in general are called *invasive* species (OMNR 2005b). Invasive species are a growing threat to biodiversity in Ontario. Unrestrained by natural predators and competitors, many of these species can reproduce rapidly. This can have a devastating impact on the composition and structure of native ecosystems. Invasive species can impair or permanently damage native trees, wetlands, lakes, and rivers.

In addition to other threats to biodiversity (e.g., pollution, habitat loss, etc.) non-native species, such as purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) and zebra mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*), have the potential to disturb and severely alter life-supporting ecosystems within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. Non-native species within the signature site will be monitored and, if it is determined that harmful invasive species exist, measures will be taken to address the control of the species. Non-native species will not be deliberately introduced to the signature site.

Until appropriate strategies (e.g., vegetation strategy) are approved, emergency measures may be considered to protect the signature site's features and values. Such measures would be subject to the approval of the appropriate MNR district manager, and/or the park superintendent.

## 7.8 Species at Risk

MNR affords enhanced protection to special concern, threatened, and endangered species through legislation, policies, and the development of recovery strategies. The Species at Risk Program, in league with a variety of partners, co-ordinates conservation, protection, and recovery actions, by increasing public awareness and education, as well as

working to prevent the further decline of affected species and their habitats.

Recovery plans identify ways to manage and improve the status of species and their habitat, and to take action to mitigate further decline. These plans include stewardship activities, habitat protection and restoration, monitoring, research and public information. Such actions may be applied within the signature site in terms of pursuing a variety of conservation, protection, and recovery efforts.

In accordance with Ontario Parks Policy *PM 11.03.02 – Protection of Species at Risk in Provincial Parks* (2004h) and the *Recovery Handbook (ROMAN)* (National Recovery Working Group 2004), Ontario Parks will participate in any species at risk strategies or initiatives that may affect species at risk within the signature site. These strategies or initiatives would also be incorporated into forest management planning on adjacent Crown lands. Public education programs may also be developed to educate visitors about measures for species protection, and to ensure the species' continuance.

Protection of habitat for known species at risk was considered during zoning of the signature site. The known occurrences or high potential for the following species at risk within the provincial parks is provided in Table 4 (North-South Environmental Inc. 2001; OMNR 2004i). No known species at risk have been documented within the EMAs. However, given the size and span of the signature site, and the relative scarcity of at-risk wildlife, species at risk and other species that are regionally or locally rare may likely exist within the area but have not been documented.

***Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA***

**Table 4: Probable Species at Risk within Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River Provincial Parks**

| Birds | SARO[1] List | Provincial Rank (NHIC)[2] |
|---|---|---|
| Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) | Special Concern | Uncommon to Common Breeder / Non-breeding migrant |
| Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) | Threatened | Vulnerable Breeder |
| Great Gray Owl (*Strix nebulosa*) | Special Concern | Vulnerable / Apparently Secure |
| **Mammals** | | |
| Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septenttrionali*)* | | Vulnerable |
| Eastern Wolf (*Canis Lupis*) | Special Concern | Uncommon to Common (Gray Wolf) |
| **Herpetiles** | | |
| Blanding's Turtle (*Emyydoidea blandingii*)* | Threatened | Vulnerable |
| **Plants** | | |
| Peat Moss (*Sphagnum quinquefarium*) | | Vulnerable |
| Wavy Catharinea (*Atrichum undulatum*) | | Imperilled / Vulnerable |
| Bog Moss (*Aulacomnium androgynum*) | | Vulnerable |
| Water Awlwort (*Subularia aquatica*) | | Vulnerable |

* Species range reported in the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site.

## 7.9 Cultural Resources

The management of cultural resources within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site will be directed toward the protection and provision of heritage appreciation and research, where these activities do not impair the features and values. Protecting cultural resources will be a high priority and is addressed through zoning, legislation, and public education. The protection of cultural resources will be carried out in accordance with MNR's cultural heritage guidelines (OMNR 2006) and *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks*

[1] SARO – Species at Risk in Ontario List (Issued by the MNR's Species at Risk Section)

[2] National Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) rank conveying the degree of rarity of the species at the provincial (or sub-national) level.

*and Conservation Reserves* and/or *A Class Environmental Assessment for MNR Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects*.

Implementation of measures to identify and protect sacred Aboriginal sites and traditions will also be a priority. Aboriginal communities have been invited to identify traditional uses and sites and to explore approaches with MNR to protect Aboriginal heritage. The sensitivity of this information will be respected. Recognized and suspected burial sites within the provincial parks will be treated with respect and will be managed according to Ontario Parks policy *PM 11.05 – Treatment of Human Burial Sites in Provincial Parks*.

Ontario Parks/MNR will continue to work with the Ministry of Culture to inventory, protect, and maintain archaeological and historic sites within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. Further cooperation with interested Aboriginal people, and ongoing archaeological investigations, will be pursued in an attempt to locate additional cultural heritage sites associated with past Aboriginal, fur trade, and logging activities.

Ontario Parks/MNR district staff will carry out periodic inspections of all identified significant sites, with protective controls established, as required. The removal of artefacts or the destruction of historical features is illegal, and is prohibited under the *Ontario Heritage Act* (1990), the *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Royal Assent received on June 20, 2006 and proclamation pending)*, and the *Public Lands Act*. Archaeological assessments will be undertaken prior to any proposed development within the signature site which has the potential to disturb cultural heritage resources. As significant archaeological discoveries are made in the future, the approved signature site management plan may be amended (e.g., changes to park zoning and development details).

With direction from MNR/Ontario Parks and in partnership with interested Aboriginal communities and "Friends" groups, or similar organizations, interpretive programs profiling the history of Aboriginal use, the fur trade, and the forest industry may be designed and implemented.

# 8.0 OPERATION POLICIES

This signature site management plan describes the policies for resource management, client services and park facilities. Spanish River and Biscotasi Lake provincial parks are not operational at this time; however, once a business analysis and operating plan has been completed for these protected areas, a level of public service may be provided. There are currently no official operating dates for the provincial parks and no user fees are collected.

Once prepared, an operational plan will provide staff with the information required for daily operational activities. This operating plan will apply to both parks in the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site and may include Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area Enhanced Management Area (EMA).

To encourage the implementation of operations in the EMAs, the establishment and use of partnerships may be considered (e.g., First Nation communities, existing operators). Management direction for the signature site will encourage the establishment of partnerships for resource stewardship. Cooperating associations may be established, or existing collaborations and associations (e.g., cottager's association, Friends of the Spanish River) may be encouraged to participate.

A variety of existing recreational activities occur within the signature site, including canoeing, camping, fishing, hunting, and wildlife and scenic viewing. To a lesser extent, and localized to a few lakes, ice fishing, and snowmobiling also take place. The rest of this section summarizes operational policies for access and roads, recreation management, natural heritage education, and research.

## 8.1 Access and Roads

The primary access to and within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site requires the use of authorized roads and trails, as specified in the following subsections. Secondary access by air and water are also addressed. Only one access point is maintained by MNR, to a very minimal standard.

***Pogamasing Landing***

The Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site contains, and is adjacent to, a network of long-term forest access roads which pre-date the designation of the signature site. In order to sustain and enhance the ecological integrity and semi-remote character of the signature site, motorized travel may be restricted and roads or trails may be closed and rehabilitated, where it is deemed necessary to protect significant natural, cultural, and recreational features or values.

An *integrated resource access strategy* may be developed to describe all aspects of access within the signature site's provincial parks and EMAs. This strategy would address safety concerns, such as the public use of forest access roads which are currently being maintained and used by the forest industry.

### 8.1.1 Access

Access by recreational visitors to the signature site will be managed according to the direction provided in section *5.2 Existing Access and Development*. Controlled access will allow for more effective recreation and visitor management within the parks, and will improve the protection of the semi-remote character of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site.

Authorized resource users and land holders will be issued a letter of authority to allow them the use of motorized vehicles to carry out those activities associated with their authorized use within the provincial parks. These authorized users include trappers, bear management area operators, and baitfish operators.

**Provincial Parks**

The current means of access into the provincial parks is varied and widespread; visitors can access the parks by air, water, and land (i.e., road and railway). Access, as the point of entry into the parks for recreational pursuits, is identified under park zoning, and applies mainly to backcountry campers and recreational day-users. Any access points or roads that are found to negatively impact park values, or are not well-positioned for controlling access to recreational pursuits, may be decommissioned. MNR and Ontario Parks have jurisdiction to control public access on Crown land, with consideration for the appropriate policies concerning public notification.

Authorized access to private property will continue. Existing private property owners and land use permit holders within the signature site are also authorized to travel by mechanized means to access their property only. Requests for new private road access will not be considered.

As a part of the standard conditions of their land use permit, land holders are responsible for access and the quality of that access. Where existing access roads or trails are essential for continued access to tenured land, and where alternatives or relocations are not warranted or feasible, the existing access may continue. Access will be documented, negotiated, and connected to land use permit renewals.

Access to existing mining lands will continue; however, as per subsection *4.4 Forest Reserve*, conditions for access may be reviewed in future planning to protect park features and values.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

The Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area EMA has been designated as a recreation category EMA for its semi-remote recreation and tourism potential. The intent of designating this area as an EMA is to maintain or enhance the quality of semi-remote recreational activities and experiences. Ishpodnok and Acheson Lake EMAs have been designated as *remote access* and are intended to maintain the semi-remote character of the selected areas. The land use intent indicates that new long term all season public access within the EMAs will not be created.

Existing access into Sinaminda Lake will continue. Improvements and maintenance by MNR will only be considered if funding is available. Partnerships may also be considered for the improvement and maintenance of access facilities (e.g., washrooms, garbage facilities, etc.) at Sinaminda Lake or other desired access points.

Authorized access to private property will continue. Existing private property owners and land use permit holders within the signature site are also authorized to travel by mechanized means to access their property only.

### 8.1.2 Roads

**Provincial Parks**

New recreational roads will not be authorized within the Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park. All authorized roads located within the Spanish River Provincial Park are governed by the *Highway Traffic Act* (1990). This legislation prohibits the use of all-terrain vehicles (ATV) and off-road vehicles (ORV) on park roads (see subsection *8.3 Motorized Travel*). Roads within the signature site are not maintained.

Motorized vehicles will not be permitted to gain access to the Spanish River Provincial Park through any existing or new roads, other than those within designated park access and development zones. Authorized land holders and non-timber resource use harvesters who have been given written permission will be excepted.

Development and maintenance of existing and new roads for the Spanish River Provincial Park will be identified within the integrated resource access strategy and site development plans, during the implementation stage. The two forest access water crossings within the Spanish River Provincial Park are discussed in subsection *8.2 Metagama Road Water Crossings*.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

Roads within the EMAs are governed under the *Public Lands Act*, and the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*. Roads for industrial and commercial uses are permitted; however, building and maintenance standards for these roads should be lower than those governing primary access roads. New roads, which will be restricted from public use, will be designed through long-term access planning which considers the features and values of the area. Existing authorized access will continue.

**New Roads**

- New roads will be closed to motorized public access.
- MNR will supply the sustainable forest license (SFL) holder with signs which indicate which new roads will be restricted from motorized public access.
- The signs, which will be maintained and monitored by the SFL holder for the duration of the road's use, will be posted at or near the beginning of the road prior to construction.
- All water crossings will be removed by the forest industry when forestry operations have been completed (see section *8.2 Metagama Road Water Crossings* for more details).
- Roads that are no longer required for forest management purposes will be actively de-commissioned, as proposed by the road use strategies developed during the forest management planning process.
- Consideration will be given to building the roads to the lowest possible standard.
- Consideration will be given to locating roads in such a way to facilitate closure, decommissioning, and rehabilitation (i.e., in order to inhibit future access).

***Existing Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Roads***

- Existing roads will not be closed to motorized public access (unless previously identified in an existing road use strategy)
- Once forest management activities are complete, and the forestry company no longer needs the road, and neither the company or MNR wishes to assume liability and monitoring responsibilities, water crossings may be removed (by the forestry company and/or MNR), unless other stakeholders wish to assume responsibility for the water crossing.

***Forest Access Roads***

An *integrated resource access strategy* would include all existing authorized roads through, or adjacent to, the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. This is consistent with direction in the *Land Use Strategy* (pg. 20) where "...existing forestry access roads that are essential for continued access beyond the area for forest management... will continue to be available for access, provided alternative access does not exist and road relocation is not feasible. Continued use will include maintenance and may also include future upgrading."

The main roads within the signature site are forest access roads. MNR/Ontario Parks and the forest industry are in agreement to manage the roads, which will continue to be used and maintained by the forest industry (OMNR 2002e). The requirement and use of existing authorized roads will be determined through the forest management planning process, with input from Ontario Parks and MNR districts. Road use strategies will be negotiated during the Spanish Forest and the Northshore Forest management planning process, and will be implemented through annual work schedules (AWS).

The forest industry will use existing authorized staging areas on forest access roads, with conditions for use and/or restrictions being determined during implementation planning.

Other considerations regarding forest access roads include:

- The designated canoe route along Pogamasing Creek will have no water crossings developed and no forest access roads within 400 metres of the creeks.
- Current public access restrictions from Metagama Road will continue and public access restrictions will be implemented with any new roads required from the south.
- There will be no forest access roads within 400 metres of Indian and Biscotasi lakes, Spanish River, Reynolds Creek, and Pogamasing, Kennedy, Franklin, Tremblay, and Acheson lakes within Spanish River Provincial Park.
- Assessment of the secondary road in the vicinity of Tower Lake will be included in the road use strategy.

Existing trails may be documented and monitored to maintain current levels of recreational access. This may lead to future restrictions if hunting and fishing pressures cause a corresponding decline in healthy fish and wildlife populations.

The Agnes River Bridge and gate (in Craig Township) will be removed, once forest operations have been completed. This is in accordance with the original intent of the bridge, developed during earlier forest management planning. During forestry operations, the SFL holder will ensure that the gate remains securely locked. The road shall be bermed during periods of low use to prevent illegal access into the signature site. Once the *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management Plan* has been approved, a MOU with protocol and conditions will be established between Ontario Parks, Sudbury MNR District, and the SFL holder, in order to administer the use and management of the road, gate, and bridge.

Minor realignments of forest access roads may also occur if necessary, for upgrading, safety, and maintenance purposes, provided that park values are protected, and *Environmental Assessment Act* requirements are met.

***Aggregate for Road Maintenance***

Wayside aggregate pits, under Category 14 or Category 9 land use permits, used by the SFL holders for forest industry purposes, and possibly park operations, will continue to be available in the EMAs (OMNR 1999a). These wayside pits are used for sand and gravel extraction for the maintenance of roads, as proposed in forest management planning, and identified in AWSs. The use of wayside pits by the forest industry will be permitted to continue, subject to operating standards. New gravel pits for public use are not permitted in the park.

**Crown Land Adjacent to the Provincial Parks**

Where unrestricted motorized public access is having a negative impact on the protected area and its associated values, Ontario Parks or other stakeholders may request that a road be closed to motorized public access, under the *Public Lands Act*. The request will be reviewed

by the applicable MNR district and will be subject to public consultation.

### 8.1.3 Trails

**Provincial Parks**

There are unauthorized trails within the signature site. A recreation strategy may be prepared to identify authorized trails into and through the Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River provincial parks. All other trails would be considered illegal and will be physically closed and restored to a natural condition, subject to available resources.

New trails will not be permitted, except for the purposes of park management, or for access to the forest reserve for mineral exploration or development. Trails for the purposes of park management would be subject to provisions of *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves*, and site planning. The planning and development of trails should consider the features, values, and aesthetics of the area, and should be directed to existing corridors where possible.

Authorized resource users will be issued a letter of authority to allow them the use of motorized vehicles to carry out those activities associated with their authorized use within the provincial parks. These authorized users include trappers, bear management area operators, and baitfish operators. Existing trails used by commercial resource harvesters will continue and new trails will not be permitted; however new trails needed to access mining claims and leases are allowed. Trails associated with existing trap lines are for use of the registered trapper(s) and their designated assistant(s) only. Public use of these trails will not be permitted. The location of trails should consider park values and objectives.

Land holders within the provincial parks will be issued a letter of authority to use existing, identified trails to access their property, as described in subsection *8.1.1 Access*.

Subject to ecological considerations and implementation planning for the signature site, realignments of existing trails may be necessary, and will be evaluated by Ontario Parks/MNR districts and through consultation with the affected commercial harvest operators, and/or landholders.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

According to the *Land Use Strategy*, the character of remote access EMAs on the landscape will be retained through the planning and establishment of standards for the location, and the use or abandonment of roads and trails.

Proposals for new trails for motorized travel may be considered, provided that they are determined to respect the signature site's objectives and do not facilitate additional access into designated tourism lakes, and the adjacent Spanish River Provincial Park.

### 8.1.4 Canadian Pacific Railway

The right-of-way of the railway line traverses the mid-section of the Spanish River Provincial Park and forms part of its boundary north of The Forks. A railway bridge crossing over the Spanish River (north of Sheahan) allows for rail travel to the north, and to the west, to the hamlet of Biscotasing.

A MOU with the CPR will be pursued in order to outline access to and the maintenance of the bridge and the railway line. Pedestrian and motorized use of railway crossing is not permitted.

***Old Railroad Bridge***

### 8.1.5 Signage

**Provincial Parks**

Signage within and exterior to the provincial parks will be the responsibility of Ontario Parks, and will be in accordance with provincial park standards and guidelines.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

The establishment of restricted access signs for EMAs, as per the *Public Lands Act*, will be the responsibility of the SFL holder. The SFL holder may choose to establish information or courtesy signs at their own cost. After forest management activities are completed, MNR will be responsible for signage.

## 8.2 Metagama Road Water Crossings

The *Land Use Strategy* states that existing and new river crossings would be evaluated during the development of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site Management Plan. Two river crossings, known as the West and East Branch bridges, were built in 1992 to allow access for forestry purposes. These two forest access water crossings were built based on the recommendations submitted during the development of the *Spanish River Special Area Plan*. During the planning process, the public was asked to respond to the recommendation of the Parks Council (to MNR in 1984) to allow the installation of two bridges in the "Special Area." The *Spanish River Special Area Plan* was the forum for the public decisions made on the location of these crossings, the type of structure, and mitigation measures to lessen the impacts on canoe route users. These bridges are now within the boundaries of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site.

The West Branch Bridge was built as a permanent structure, and allowed for full forest management activities. Timber was actively being hauled west to the siding of the CPR line. Timber hauling was not allowed from June 1 to August 31, in order to reduce the impacts of this activity on river recreation travel, semi-remote tourism, and backcountry users.

***West Branch Bridge***

The East Branch Bridge was established as a temporary bridge with a short life span, and was not intended for timber hauling. The original purpose of the bridge was to transport workers, equipment, etc., from the east, until forest management activities were completed in the allocations between the two river branches. With adequate justification (e.g., extenuating or exceptional circumstances), timber hauling to the east can be permitted, provided that an application explaining the rational is submitted to and approved by MNR Northeast Regional Director (OMNR 1990).

The *Spanish River Special Area Plan* approved of the bridges and their life span, in principle. The plan recognized both the temporal need of the East Branch Bridge for forest management, as well as the importance of the east branch of the river as a significant waterway corridor for Crown land recreation. The *Spanish River Special Area Plan* concluded that no additional crossings would be permitted on the Spanish River. A commitment to restrict public vehicular access across the two bridges was established, and measures were put in place to manage access on the Metagama Road.

During the 1996 forest management planning process, harvest blocks between the branches were deferred until 2005. By default, the life span of the East Branch Bridge was extended until forest operations could be completed on the deferred blocks. Since that time, conditions have changed on the landscape and within the business of forest production, which have made the transportation of timber by train less feasible. This has resulted in an increased

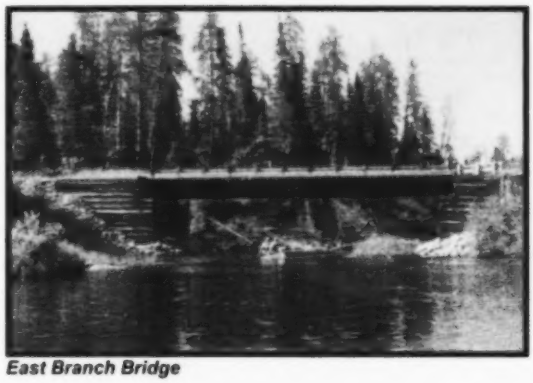
amount of timber hauling by trucks to local mills.

In 2000, Domtar Inc. requested an amendment to the *Spanish River Special Area Plan* to remove the hauling restrictions, and to allow the East Branch Bridge to remain in place until 2020, at which time the need for the structure would be re-evaluated. The decision was deferred by MNR so that the issue could be dealt with during the planning stages of the *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Preliminary Management Plan*. Once the planning procedure was developed, Domtar Inc. was informed of the process. The SFL holder was then invited to submit their recommendation for the bridges, and to participate in the background scoping exercise.

### 8.2.1 Management Direction for Crossings

In consideration of the current circumstances, both bridges will remain as permanent structures, with the purpose of carrying out forest management activities in the Spanish Forest, within the restrictions identified below. Special consideration for temporary alternate uses (e.g., commercial tourism, access to infrastructure) of the crossings may be authorized, excluding the travel restrictions identified over the East Branch Bridge. However, the failure of persons or companies so granted to meet with the conditions outlined in this management plan and within the issued Letter of Authority may result in the loss of future consideration for access.

In connection with the goal and objectives of the signature site, management of the presence and use of the two water crossings will be managed in such a way that minimizes their impact on recreational and commercial activities within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. Recreational users, however, should recognize that while the area is considered to be semi-remote wilderness, some non-park development and use is expected along the extent of the Spanish River. Access to the Spanish River via the Metagama Road is not permitted.



***East Branch Bridge***

### 8.2.2 Conditions On the Use of Crossings

A modified version of "Option B" from the *Spanish River Valley Signature Site Management Options* was selected to recognize both the exceptional recreational values, and the important resource harvest extraction needs, within the setting of a significant semi-remote tourism area. Direction in the management plan recognizes that water crossings within a long linear waterway provincial park may be required. In order to address comments and concerns from the Aboriginal and public consultation process, as well as discussions with stakeholder groups, the following conditions will apply to the presence and use of the bridges:

1) The provisions in this management plan, once approved and released, will replace the *Spanish River Special Area Plan* and parts of the *Biscotasi Local Area Land Use Strategy* amendment to the *Chapleau District Land Use Guidelines*, and the *Gogama District Land Use Guidelines*, and will give direction for forest management planning.

2) Hauling restrictions are intended to prevent potential user conflicts between the forest industry, the tourism industry and signature site visitors. The direction for the West Branch Bridge is in keeping with the intent of the *Spanish River Special Area Plan*. The direction for the East Branch Bridge is in keeping with the results of consultation, which considered different management options (OMNR 2004c), and determined that hauling could be balanced with other uses. Upon the release of the approved

*Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management Plan*, hauling may occur on the West Branch Bridge from September 9 to May 14, and on the East Branch Bridge from November 1 to April 30. Upon the expiration of the current forest management plan (FMP) on March 31, 2010, travel on the East Branch Bridge will be restricted to all users (excluding safety and emergency needs) from May 1 to October 31. Planning for the *2010-2030 Spanish Forest Management Plan* will commence in 2008 and is expected to be implemented on April 1, 2010.

3) The visual presence of the bridges will be altered to set them into the landscape, as was originally intended. Vegetation enhancements, such as plantings of cedar trees and suitable shrubs on the approaches, and/or physical alteration of the structures, are methods which will be evaluated to develop an aesthetic redesign of the structures.

4) Public vehicular access restrictions, which have existed since construction of both bridges, will remain. Restrictions on the Metagama Road, from Wapejo Creek to Ivy Creek, will be strengthened to prohibit unauthorized entry to Spanish River Provincial Park. The two access gates on the Metagama Road will be maintained by the SFL holder and will be kept closed and locked while hauling restrictions are in effect. Once the management plan is approved, a MOU with protocol and conditions will be established between Ontario Parks, MNR district offices, and the SFL holder in order to articulate the use and management of the road, gates, and bridges. Access to the park and the surrounding Crown land from the Metagama Road, will be monitored and enforced by Ontario Parks and MNR district staff. Requests for special consideration to temporarily use the Metagama Road will be directed towards the appropriate district manager, with input from the park superintendent.

5) Monitoring of the conditions and maintenance requirements of the bridges, approaches, and abutments will be the responsibility of the SFL holder, as per the terms of the MOU. Maintenance of the approaches, bridges, and abutments will consider park features and values, and will mitigate erosion and sedimentation from the road into the Spanish River.

6) Another MOU will be developed for corporate, non-forest management access through the gates, which may not necessarily involve bridge use (e.g., CPR, INCO Ltd., existing commercial tourism). The MOU will allow use for the purpose of maintaining corporate infrastructure. This use will be conducted in a manner that respects the features and values of the signature site.

### 8.2.3 Crossing Review

A review of the necessity of the bridges to the forest industry will be conducted in concert with the 20-year review of the *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management Plan*. At the time, if the bridges are determined not to be feasible for forest operations (e.g., change in markets or methods of shipping), the bridges may be removed from the provincial park.

## 8.3 Motorized Travel

The *Land Use Strategy* states that travel by snowmobiles, ATVs, and ORVs, for recreational purposes on existing authorized trails, will be permitted to continue. Furthermore, some individuals or groups, such as resource users, will retain the right to use ATVs and ORVs within provincial parks, according to the terms of their authorized resource use (e.g., trapping).

A trail plan may be developed to identify and describe the terms and standards for authorized trails, and the periodic monitoring of trail conditions. The trail plan will facilitate the management of these activities throughout the signature site. The trail plan will not apply to trails needed for mineral exploration.

If any activities are found to conflict with species at risk or their habitat, appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that the species and their habitats are protected.

### 8.3.1 Snowmobiles

**Provincial Parks**

The purpose of recreational snowmobile use in the provincial parks is to gain access to Crown

land adjacent to the parks, and to gain access to desired lakes for sport ice fishing. Recreational snowmobile use will be limited to established routes, as designated by the park superintendent.

In general, the off-trail use of snowmobiles is not permitted. However, off-trail use is permitted for licensed trappers to access their trap lines, and for licensed bait harvest operators to conduct bait harvest operations. In these cases, off-trail use is permitted, provided that the protection of the signature site's features and values are not compromised. Should snowmobile use degrade the landscape, Ontario Parks will re-evaluate this use.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

Snowmobile use within all EMAs will be permitted as on Crown land. Transient use of snowmobiles on Crown land is permitted to continue subject the *Motorized Snow Vehicles Act* (1990) and the *Public Lands Act*. The existing level of use may be maintained. New trails associated with this activity will not be permitted. Should snowmobile use begin to degrade the landscape or affect the values that the EMA designation sought to protect, MNR will re-evaluate this use.

### 8.3.2 All-Terrain Vehicles and Off-Road Vehicles

**Provincial Parks**

Public vehicular travel within the provincial parks is restricted to authorized roads within applicable access and development zones. Off-road travel will not be permitted.

There are no existing authorized trails for recreational ATV or ORV use within the provincial parks. ATVs and ORVs are permitted in access and development zones on trails that have been designated by the park superintendent. Other trails may be designated by the park superintendent on a case by case basis in other zones (e.g., for the retrieval of game).

Authorized resource users and land holders will be issued a letter of authority to allow them the use of motorized vehicles to carry out those activities associated with their authorized use within the provincial parks. These authorized users include trappers, bear management area operators, and baitfish operators. Existing trails used by commercial resource harvesters will continue and new trails will not be permitted. New trails that are needed to access mining claims and leases, however, are allowed. Trails associated with existing trap lines are for use only of the registered trapper(s) and their designated assistant(s). Public use of these trails will not be permitted. The location of trails should consider park values and objectives.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

The use of ORVs and ATVs within all EMAs, in conjunction with a recreation strategy for the signature site, will be permitted, as on Crown land. The transient use of ORVs and ATVs on Crown land is permitted to continue, subject to the *Off-Road Vehicles Act* (1990) and the *Public Lands Act*. The existing level of use may be maintained. Any new trails associated with this activity will be prohibited. Should this use begin to degrade the landscape or affect EMA values, MNR will re-evaluate this use.

### 8.3.3 Motorboats and Watercraft

**Motorboats**

**Provincial Parks**

Biscotasi Lake is a reservoir with many shoals, submerged rocks, and shallow bays. MNR and Ontario Parks currently manage the lake for resource-based tourism with remote access. Motorboats will continue to be permitted on Biscotasi Lake. There is no horsepower restriction for this lake. However, the use of motors will be discouraged in nature reserve zones.

In Spanish River Provincial Park, motors will be restricted to a maximum of 25 horsepower, except within Pogamasing Lake, where there is no horsepower restriction, and Expanse Lake, where motors will be prohibited. The use of motors will be discouraged in wilderness and nature reserve zones.

This activity will be monitored. Should this use begin to degrade the landscape or values for which this area was designated, and/or have a negative impact on the wilderness or nature reserve zones within the parks, future motorboat use may be re-evaluated.

#### Enhanced Management Areas

The transient use of motorboats with a reasonable right of moorage, as described in the *Free Use Policy* (OMNR 2004j), enforced under the *Public Lands Act*, and subject to the *Navigable Waters Protection Act* (1985), will be permitted in all EMAs within the signature site. Should this activity begin to degrade the landscape or values for which these areas were designated, future use may need to be revaluated.

### Personal Watercraft and Houseboats

#### Provincial Parks

Houseboats are a form of commercial outpost on Biscotasi Lake. Clients moor in specified bays and fish locally or by motorboat. There are three existing houseboats which are equipped with facilities for handling sewage, but not grey water waste. Concerns have been expressed by some people about potential environmental contamination caused by this type of watercraft. The existing commercial use of the three houseboats on Biscotasi Lake will continue as per the current operations and applicable regulations.

#### Enhanced Management Areas

The use of personal watercraft, such as jet skis, and houseboats within all of the EMAs will be permitted to continue, subject to the *Free Use Policy*, the *Navigable Waters Protection Act*, and the *Public Lands Act*. Individuals may enjoy travelling on navigable waterways with the right of reasonable moorage. A guideline for reasonable moorage is 21 days, but this may vary based on local circumstances, and at the discretion of MNR. Individuals mooring in front of their own waterfront property are exempt, as are individuals during emergency situations.

***Boat Caching***

### Boat Caches

#### Provincial Parks

A boat cache strategy will be prepared for Spanish River and Biscotasi Lake provincial parks, which will identify locations that are suitable for commercial boat caches. Persons wanting to cache a boat(s) for commercial tourism purposes within the provincial parks can submit their requests to Ontario Parks. Boat caching for traditional access to property will follow the same process. Upon review of the purpose, numbers, and locations, approvals may be issued. A fee would be charged for the issuance of an authorized boat cache decal. Any boats and related equipment found within the provincial parks without an affixed authorized boat cache decal may be removed from the park.

#### Enhanced Management Areas

Boat caching will be permitted to continue within the EMAs, adjacent to a waterway, except where a boat would block a public road, trail, access point, or portage. A permit is currently not required to cache a boat within the EMAs, except for commercial purposes where a land use permit is authorized. Should the number of cached boats increase and become detrimental to the landscape and/or values for which the area was designated, this use may be re-evaluated.

### 8.3.4 Aircraft Landing and Access

#### Provincial Parks

Aircraft landing will be permitted within the Spanish River and Biscotasi Lake provincial parks, except for waterbodies that are within wilderness and nature reserve zones and zone *NE4-Expanse Lake*. These restrictions recognize that exceptions may need to be made for licensed resource uses and access to private lands.

Aircraft landing permits may be issued annually by Ontario Parks for waterbodies within the provincial parks, with payment of an applicable fee, in which details will be verified during operations planning for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

Aircraft landings will be permitted within all EMAs. A permit is not required for aircraft landings within the EMAs. However, should values for which the EMAs were protected be compromised, this permitted use may be reviewed and altered.

## 8.4 Recreation Management

Recreation management will provide for a variety of recreational opportunities while minimizing the negative environmental impacts on the signature site's natural, cultural and recreational values. Opportunities for non-consumptive activities such as wildlife viewing and photography will be encouraged. Opportunities for semi-remote canoeing, camping, hunting and fishing may be promoted.

Users of the area have expressed concerns about garbage disposal, human waste, perceived crowding, and deteriorating campsites, especially along the main branch of the Spanish River, and Biscotasi Lake. Campsites on the Spanish River are not well-distributed, so some are heavily used. On Biscotasi Lake, many campsites are on environmentally sensitive locations (e.g., small islands). A trail plan will be prepared to identify all existing and potential travel corridors in the signature site and how they will be managed. This would include the numerous portage trails, informal walking paths, and some nature trails.

Recreational activities in provincial parks that are not compatible with the signature site's goal and objectives or with specific zones are either prohibited or restricted. Prevention and control of incompatible recreational activities will be achieved through visitor education and enforcement within the signature site. In addition, if any activities are found to conflict with species at risk or their habitat, appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that the species and their habitats are protected.

Tranquillity and solitude are important attributes that contribute to the enjoyment of the signature site. Local outfitters have noted an increase in the number of people recreating in the area. This is a special concern for recreationists whose interest in the area is based on a sense of quiet, remoteness, and solitude. The level of solitude will be maintained or enhanced by controlling the number of people in the signature site at any given time.

Recreational carrying capacity is the level of recreational use an area can withstand while providing a sustained quality of recreation. Two components are important: first, the capability of the biophysical environment to sustain use without deteriorating; and second, the tolerance level to which a user encounters other users. Under the *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Royal Assent received on June 20, 2006 and proclamation pending)*, the superintendent has the ability to limit the numbers of interior camping permits. This quota is normally developed under a visitor distribution program. By regulation, the maximum number of campers per interior campsite at any given time is nine.

Should visitor distribution require it, a reservation system or another method of visitor management may be used to limit or redistribute recreational use within the signature site. This may also include the creation and/or maintenance of overnight camping locations within the EMAs, to accommodate visitor overflow during peak recreation periods.

### 8.4.1 Canoe Routes and Portages

There are extensive canoe routes through and adjoining the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site. The potential for backcountry hiking trails to complement existing semi-remote canoeing experiences is also available within the signature site.

MNR districts/Ontario Parks may work with operators to establish new installations to monitor and provide information on water volumes from structures for recreational users (e.g., cubic metres per second for canoeists). Recreational flows and visitor uses will be monitored to enhance the quality of the canoeing experience, and will be amended in the new *Spanish/Vermilion Rivers Water Management Plan*.

**Provincial Parks**

Within the overall trail and route plan of the recreation strategy for the signature site, Ontario Parks may consider the development of new portages and the upgrade of existing portages with consideration for to the signature

site's objectives, and the affected zone's features and values.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

The use of existing canoe routes and portages will be permitted to continue unless there are significant conflicts which may affect the features and values of the EMAs. Portages and canoe routes within these areas will not be maintained unless additional funding is obtained or partnerships are developed. The potential development of new trails will be compatible with the semi-remote nature of the EMAs, as well as policies concerning development and access around identified trout lakes. Enhanced protection of canoe routes and portages within the EMAs may be necessary and will be addressed during forest management planning.

### 8.4.2 Hiking Trails

**Provincial Parks**

Within the trail plan of the recreation strategy for the signature site, Ontario Parks may consider the development of new hiking trails and the expansion of existing hiking trails, in all zones, with consideration given to the signature site's objectives, and the affected zone's values. Use of existing hiking trails for non-mechanized travel will be permitted to continue.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

The use of existing hiking trails will be permitted to continue, unless there are conflicts which significantly affect the values of the EMA or the signature site. Hiking trails will not be maintained within these areas, unless additional funding is obtained, or partnerships are developed. The potential development of new trails will be compatible with the semi-remote nature of the EMAs as well as policies concerning development and access around identified trout lakes.

### 8.4.3 Camping and Park Fees

**Provincial Parks**

Existing recreational facilities are limited within the signature site and camping areas have developed over time, which may not necessarily be appropriate for supporting the signature site's objectives. Camping will only be permitted at designated campsites within Biscotasi Lake and Spanish River provincial parks. Park fees may be charged for overnight camping but not for day-use. There are currently no user fees being collected. Zones *D1-Duke Lake* and *D4-The Elbow* will have managed camping and short-term use capabilities.

Canoe-in, boat-in, and hike-in campsites may be developed, in accordance with the recreation strategy and implementation planning to provide backcountry camping opportunities throughout the signature site. If necessary, a reservation system may be considered, and a visitor distribution program may be developed, to help establish a recreational carrying capacity for the Spanish River and Biscotasi Lake Provincial Parks.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

Camping will be permitted within the EMAs, as per the *Free Use Policy* for Crown land camping. Recreational camping on Crown land is permitted for a maximum of 21 days, unless otherwise posted, for residents of Canada. Non-residents are subject to all applicable camping fees.

### 8.4.4 Other Non-motorized Recreation

The management of recreational activities is necessary due to public safety and liability concerns, as well as the potential negative impacts on natural and cultural features and values. There are emerging recreational uses which either lack or have a limited policy to guide the management of the activity (e.g., adventure racing). Ontario Parks and MNR districts will work with individuals and groups, using guidelines that are available, such as the Ontario Parks policy PM 2.47 *High Risk Activities by Organized Groups in Provincial Parks* (OMNR 2005g), in order to ensure that the signature site's goals and objectives are being met.

**Cross-country Skiing and Snowshoeing**

Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing will be permitted within the signature site. There are no maintained trails within the signature site. New trails may be designated, as long as they complement the semi-remote nature of the signature site.

***A great day for a paddle!***

### Geocaching

Geocaching is an outdoor activity in which participants use a global positioning system (GPS) to find a predetermined location or "cache". Caches can be either "physical" or "virtual." A physical cache is a container holding a log book and small rewards (e.g., key chains, pins, coins, etc.) which is placed at a specified location for the participant to find. The visitor is asked to log their visit to the cache site and to leave or replace items that they find in the cache. A virtual cache is an object which was already at a specific location (e.g., an obvious tree, rock formation, building, or structure etc.). The reward for virtual caches tends to be the location itself.

Geocaching may be permitted within the signature site. Requests to participate in physical or virtual geocaching will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### Horseback Riding

Except for in wilderness and nature reserve zones, horseback riding within the provincial parks may be permitted on trails designated by the park superintendent. There are presently no trails designated for this activity; however, new trails may be designated within the Spanish River Provincial Park if they complement the historical use of the area. Horseback riding will be permitted in the EMAs.

### Mountain Biking

Mountain biking within the provincial parks may be permitted on roads and trails designated by the superintendent. Mountain biking is permitted on all authorized roads within the provincial parks; however, there are not any trails designated for this activity at present. New trails may be designated, as long as they complement the semi-remote nature of the signature site. Mountain biking is permitted with the EMAs.

### Painting and Photography

Painting and photography will be permitted within the signature site.

### Playgrounds

Playgrounds (e.g., play structures, swings or baseball diamonds) are not compatible with the goal or objectives of the signature site and will not be permitted.

### Rock Climbing

Rock climbing in the provincial parks may be permitted on areas designated by the park superintendent. This activity is prohibited in zones *H3-Ninth Lake Pictographs* and *H7-Eagle Rock*. Rock climbing is permitted within the EMAs. There are no designated rock climbing areas at present.

### Water-based Activities

Sailing, sail boarding, and scuba and skin diving may be permitted within the signature site. Swimming will be permitted within the signature site; however, designated swimming areas will not be established.

## 8.4.5 Waste Management

A conservation philosophy of recycling and "pack-in/pack-out" will be promoted to park visitors. A waste management strategy may address the management of human waste, garbage, and litter within the signature site.

### Human Waste Management

#### Provincial Parks

Human waste management will be considered when selecting and designing campsite and facility locations. Standards may include privies at campsite site locations to manage human waste.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

There will be no development of waste facilities within the EMAs unless additional funding is obtained or partnerships are developed. Waste will be managed as on Crown land under the *Public Lands Act*.

### Can and Glass Bottle Ban

A method for managing the level of garbage in a backcountry environment is to implement a can and glass bottle ban for food and beverage containers.

**Provincial Parks**

In order to manage the amount of garbage and litter in Spanish River and Biscotasi Lake provincial parks, a can and glass bottle ban will be in effect for all users (including recreationists, cottagers, anglers and hunters) while recreating in the park, either day use or overnight. Direct transfer of cans and glass bottles to lands under tenure (e.g., cottages and outpost camps) or Crown land outside the parks will be permitted.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

There will be no restrictions on cans and glass bottles in the EMAs.

### Electric Motors

To minimize the impact of motorboats on other recreational users, electric motors will be encouraged throughout the signature site.

### Dumping Facilities

**Provincial Parks**

There are no authorized dumping areas within the provincial parks. New facilities within the provincial parks are not being considered; however, a waste management strategy may be developed and would be subject to *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves*. Unauthorized dumping is prohibited.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

There are no authorized dumping areas within the EMAs. Should a waste management strategy and/or facilities be considered, they would be subject to *A Class Environmental Assessment* for *Resources Stewardship and Facility Development*. Unauthorized dumping is prohibited.

## 8.5 Natural Heritage Education

There may be opportunities to enhance public awareness of the signature site through signage for self-use natural heritage education (NHE). Education, information, and interpretation will be used to enhance visitor awareness of the site's natural and cultural features, facilities, and services. Themes for NHE may include, but are not limited to:

**Old growth forests**:
Internationally significant stands of semi-continuous, pristine white and red pine

**Geomorphology**:
Deltas, stream morphology, eskers

**Wildlife and fisheries habitat**:
Wetlands, marshes, spawning beds

**Historical features**:
Pictographs, logging, fur trade outposts

**Cultural values**:
Aboriginal history and use of area, fur trade, conservation, recreation

**Provincial Parks**

The NHE strategy may identify self-use and self-guided opportunities for heritage appreciation of the historical areas. This strategy may include the development of signs, interpretive materials, trails, and self-use facilities.

The priority for development of interpretive and promotional material (e.g., signs, displays, and brochures) will be determined through NHE planning, which will commence once the signature site management plan is approved. New recreation structures, such as the development of signs, interpretive trails, and self-use facilities, are permitted subject to *A Class Environmental Assessment* for *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves*.

A sign plan may be developed to identify the required signage for safety and enforcement purposes. Signage for information and education purposes would also be addressed through a more comprehensive NHE strategy.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

Currently, there are no existing authorized natural heritage appreciation facilities or recreational structures (e.g., boardwalks, bird viewing platforms, kiosks, ski shelters, or interpretative signs) located within the EMAs.

New recreation structures, such as the development of signs, interpretive trails, and self-use facilities are permitted, subject to *A Class Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development*. Any NHE facility development should take into account the values and unique characteristics associated with each EMA, and should be compatible with these values, as well as the associated parks which make up the signature site.

Currently, there are no plans to provide recreation facilities within the EMAs. Should the need for such facilities arise in the future, they would be subject to available funding, and may be considered through partnerships with Ontario Parks and other interest groups.

## 8.6 Research and Monitoring

MNR's research and information needs relate directly to MNR's mandate, and the goals and guiding principles of the signature site. Research will be encouraged in the provincial parks and EMAs in order to gain a better understanding of the natural, cultural, and recreational features and values, and to assist in the protection, planning, and management of these areas. All research activities will be carried out in accordance with *PM 2.45 Research Activities in Parks* (OMNR 1994b).

Ongoing research and monitoring is required to address the wide range of environmental, social and economic factors necessary to administer an ecologically sustainable system of protected areas. Research activities should also assess the quality of outdoor recreational experiences and visitor satisfaction.

Scientific research and monitoring by qualified groups and individuals which contributes to the knowledge, inventory and identification of natural, cultural, and recreational features and values, will be encouraged. This will be conducted in accordance with protected areas policies, and procedures, as appropriate.

Partnerships may be established with universities and colleges, industrial, government and non-government organizations, Aboriginal and other associations, in order to advance applicable research. Technical support and assistance will be provided, where possible, by Ontario Parks/MNR staff. These studies would be significant in meeting the objectives for the protection, and the perpetuation of significant values within the protected areas.

Research and monitoring needs within the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site are diverse and include the natural, cultural and recreational aspects of the site. Examples of specific research projects which may be undertaken are:

- Field archaeological inventory of cultural heritage features and values
- Effects of fire suppression on old growth forests
- Species at risk projects, and recovery implementation
- Fisheries studies: lake assessments for stocked lakes and trout lakes
- Survey of the visitation and use of protected areas
- Socio-economic studies on remote recreation and tourism
- Effects of water management practices on erosion and other park values.

Any area that is disturbed during monitoring activities will be rehabilitated, as closely as possible, to its original condition. If, at any time, human activities are deemed to be having a negative impact on the features and values of the signature site, the activities will be reviewed and measures will be taken to mitigate any disturbance.

Any archaeological research will require approval and monitoring by the Ministry of Culture. Should significant features or resources be found after the management plan is approved, the management plan may be amended according to policy direction (e.g., major amendments require further public consultation) to ensure that appropriate

management is provided through zoning and the revision of management plan policies. This process will take place in collaboration with affected First Nation communities, if applicable.

**Provincial Parks**

All research and monitoring programs within the provincial parks will be compatible with the goal, objectives, and zoning prescriptions of the management plan. Research projects require prior approval and must be conducted in accordance with Ontario Parks' policies, procedures, and legislation (e.g., *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Royal Assent received on June 20, 2006 and proclamation pending)*, *Environmental Assessment Act*, research policies and guidelines). The collection of samples may only be permitted as part of a pre-authorized research project, and will be subject to appropriate permits and conditions.

Research projects will be monitored by Ontario Parks. Research and monitoring priorities as determined to date in the development of this preliminary management plan are listed in Table 6 and Table 7 of section *9.0 Development Policies*. Ontario Parks should be contacted for approval and/or information on conducting research and/or monitoring within the provincial parks.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

All research and monitoring programs within the EMAs will be compatible with the prescribed land use direction and values of the area within the signature site management plan. Research projects require prior approval and must be conducted in accordance with MNR policies, procedures, and legislation (e.g., *Public Lands Act*, *Environmental Assessment Act*, research policies and guidelines). Research projects will be monitored by MNR.

The collection of samples may only be permitted as part of a pre-authorized research project and may be subject to appropriate permits and conditions. Research and monitoring priorities, as determined to date, in the development of this preliminary management plan are listed in Table 6 and Table 7 of section *9.0 Development Policies*. The appropriate MNR district should be contacted for approval and/or information on conducting research and/or monitoring within EMAs.

## 8.7 Services, Compliance and Enforcement

**Provincial Parks**

An operations plan will be developed once the signature site management plan is approved. Development, and the level of services provided at the parks, will be implemented incrementally. Programs will be implemented based on priorities for assessment, development, and budget. Campers will adhere to current regulations on litter, camping limits on number of days and persons, and access points. Staffing requirements for compliance monitoring and trip information will be identified in the operations plan. Partnerships for some operational aspects may also be pursued, such as an Aboriginal commercial outfitting service.

**Enhanced Management Areas**

MNR will be primarily responsible for implementing the management policies and guidelines for all EMAs. Human activities and the resulting impacts within the EMAs and surrounding Crown lands will be periodically monitored. MNR districts and Ontario Parks will work together to enforce legislated regulations and associated policy guidelines in the signature site, and its surrounding Crown land base.

## 8.8 Backcountry Etiquette

As the number of people exploring the wonders of our natural and cultural heritage in Ontario increases, the need to decrease our individual impact on the environment becomes more important. Understanding how our use of natural resources affects both the environment and other recreational users is vital. By understanding how to minimize our impact on the environment, we may be able to maximize the recreational experiences and values of all users, while protecting the natural and cultural features. A large amount of literature and research has been written on proper etiquette while recreating in the backcountry. General principles for travelling in the backcountry are defined in Table 5 (Curtis 1998; Teunissen 2000).

**Table 5: Principles for Backcountry Etiquette**

**PLANNING**

***Plan ahead***

- ✗ Even for the most experienced wilderness traveller, spontaneity and backcountry travel don't mix.
- ✓ Knowing the environment that you will be entering into and properly preparing for it will allow you to minimize the trace you leave behind.
- ✓ Leaving an itinerary and/or communications plan with a responsible person will help to direct any search and rescue attempts for those who have lost their way or other emergencies (e.g., medical, forest fire, storms).
- ✓ Have the proper equipment and know how to use it.
- ✓ Understanding the natural and cultural features of the area will also maximize the benefits you receive when visiting such unique areas on the landscape.

**TRAVELLING**

***Group size***

- ✗ Avoid travelling in large groups, especially in remote or sensitive areas.
- ✓ Be aware of the allowable group size for campsites. Most campsites in the Spanish River and Biscotasi Lake provincial parks have a limit of 9 persons per site.

***Trails and portages***

- ✓ Try to stay on authorized trails and portages to avoid trampling vegetation or disturbing wildlife.

**FIRE**

***Use fire responsibly***

- ✗ Don't create fires outside of fire pits or during a fire ban.
- ✓ Be aware during times of drought that a fire ban may be in effect. Contact the park superintendent for details on fire conditions and other natural hazards.
- ✓ If smoking, sit down to smoke carefully and pack out remains (e.g., small metal cough-drop box).

**CAMPSITES AND SHELTERS**

***Avoid changing the environment***

- ✗ Don't cut vegetation, build walls, dig trenches or construct fire rings.
- ✗ Avoid damaging trees and trampling vegetation.
- ✓ Camp at existing sites with flat tent areas on high ground and proper fire pits.
- ✓ Avoid tarp and dry lines on trees that are prone to scarring (e.g., red pine, white birch).
- ✓ Minimize root and soil exposure by staying on maintained trails and portages and wearing soft-soled shoes when in camp.

**WASTE**

***Pack it in, pack it out***

- ✗ Don't litter. Burning trash at the site is not a solution.
- ✓ Pack out as much waste as you can. Plan on buying and packaging food in bulk. Special items such as batteries and medical waste require proper disposal. Some organic waste may be burned or disposed of on site but may attract unwelcome wildlife.
- ✓ If possible, clean as you go.

**WILDLIFE, PETS AND NATURAL FOODS**

***Respect the wildlife***

- ✗ Do not feed the wildlife, intentionally or unintentionally. Keep your campsites clean and remove all attractants when leaving. Feeding wild animals can upset the natural food chain and can modify the animal's future behaviour around humans (e.g., bears). Garbage and other foods can also be harmful to some animals.
- ✓ If bringing pets along, keep them under control at all times and prevent them from harassing wildlife or other visitors. Properly dispose of any feces.
- ✓ Follow all hunting and fishing laws.
- ✓ There may be species at risk or rare species in the area you are visiting. Be respectful of the environment.

**EDUCATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

***Leave what you find***

- ✗ Don't collect artefacts or objects (e.g., animal bones, arrowheads, cultural artefacts).
- ✗ Don't remove vegetation or disturb wildlife.
- ✓ Allow others to experience the same exhilaration of finding such items. The disturbance or removal of important artefacts without proper permits and/or authority is illegal.
- ✓ Pick up litter that is left behind from other users. Consider it a gift to those who follow.
- ✓ Remember that all plants and animals are protected within Ontario's provincial parks.

***Respect other recreational users and landholders***

- ✓ Be aware and mindful of other users. Respect their experience by minimizing your impact on them.
- ✓ Respect the rights of private land owners, commercial outpost camps and other tourism activities.

**COMPLIANCE**

***Follow the rules***

- ✓ Be aware of the policies and regulations of the area you are entering before you go.
- ✓ Know and understand what can and can not be done within each area of the parks (i.e., zoning, management strategies).
- ✓ The landscape is quite extensive and enforcement can be difficult and widespread. Help wardens and conservation officers in protecting our signature site.
- ✓ Protect our natural resources by reporting violations to park wardens, your local MNR office, the MNR toll free reporting line at 1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667), or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

# 9.0 DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Development outlined in this preliminary management plan for protected areas will meet the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act*, *A Class Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development*, and/or *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves*, including screening and approval through implementation planning.

This preliminary management plan identifies priorities for new development which may be implemented through business and work program planning. New development will be based on priorities and resource availability. Development will be carried out in accordance with approved protected area policies, procedures, and guidelines (e.g., site planning for development in provincial parks).

Some of the facilities that could potentially be constructed include entry control structures, road improvements, designated campsites, fire pits, and primitive privies on backcountry campsites, portage maintenance and development, garbage collection, boat launches, and signs. Development will not take place in nature reserve and wilderness zones of provincial parks, except for necessary signs, trails, and facilities which are consistent with the zoning direction given in the approved management plan.

## 9.1 Management Plan Implementation

Implementation strategies are identified in this preliminary management plan and will be prioritized by the development needs of the respective land use designation (refer to Table 6 and Table 7). All projects are subject to a sound business case and will require adequate funding. Since different policies and legislation govern the provincial parks and the enhanced management areas (EMAs), the approaches to implementation will vary. Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) districts and Ontario Parks will work together to address site development in an efficient and effective manner, in order to manage access, visitor distribution, camping and trail infrastructure, according to the needs identified in this preliminary management plan.

Implementation planning will follow the direction provided by the approved management plan, and may include development consistent with the following strategies:

- integrated resource access strategy
- facility development / site plans
- recreation strategy
- vegetation strategy
- fisheries strategy
- natural heritage education strategy
- visitor safety plan
- waste management strategy

## 9.2 Phase-in Implementation

The phase-in of resource stewardship, operations and development of the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site is prioritized into two phases. *Table 6: Phase 1-Implementation* and *Table 7: Phase 2-Implementation* lists potential projects which may be undertaken in the signature site.

## 9.3 Class Environmental Assessments

A class environmental assessment (EA) is an approach which applies to groups or 'classes' of projects which possess similar attributes (OMNR 2003a; 2005d). Projects within the signature site also occur within the system of Ontario provincial parks, and they adhere to the goals and objectives of that system, thus meeting the compliance requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act*. Approved class EA projects allow the activities to progress without a full EA.

A class EA screens projects based on their potential for net negative effects and/or public concern. Category A (Potential for Low Net Negative Effects and/or Public/Agency Concern) allows a project to proceed without further screening. Categories B, C, and D have the potential for greater impact. Category D projects require an individual EA. Appendix E describes the list of projects that may be carried out in the signature site. Category A projects will proceed without further screening; all other projects may cause associated impacts and are subject to further screening and assessment, before they are implemented.

**Table 6: Phase 1-Implementation**

| *Project* | *Location* | *Type* | *Comments* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Operation of signature site: business plan and implementation strategy | Spanish River, Biscotasi Lake | Internal MNR policy recognition | The provincial parks need to be identified as operating parks and receive budget allocations |
| Backcountry Operations Strategy: Implementation and Improvements | Backcountry trails, campsites and canoe route improvements, and outfitting services within the provincial parks | Several sites | Implement fee collection at existing entry sites (e.g., Duke Lake, The Elbow, Biscotasing). Business planning and partnership agreements to provide details of operations. |
| Integrated Resource Access Strategy | Signature Site, surrounding Crown land | Implementation Document | To provide direction and manage all access |
| Recreation Strategy | Signature Site | Implementation Document | To guide recreational activities |
| Vegetation Strategy | Signature Site | Implementation Document | To guide vegetation (including fire) management |
| Fisheries Strategy | Signature Site | Implementation Document | To guide fisheries management |
| Boat Cache Strategy | Biscotasi and Spanish River Provincial Parks | Implementation Document | To identify locations that are suitable for commercial tourism |
| Road Use Strategy | Signature Site | Implementation Document | To provide direction and manage roads |
| Sign Plan | Hwy 144, Duke Lake, Agnew Lake, Biscotasing, Metagama Station, Sheahan, The Elbow | Park Boundary Signs and Visitor Safety Notices | To meet Operations standards for access mgt. and safety of visitors |
| Marketing Plan | Signature Site | Implementation document | To promote signature site |
| Campsite Upgrade | Signature Site | Clean-Up, Privies, Fire Pits | Upgrade to operations standards |
| Waste Management Strategy | Hamlet of Biscotasing (outside of park), unauthorized dump at Sheahan | Fees to support use of waste facilities; removal of illegal dumping site | As part of business plan, work with other interests who have waste management concerns |
| Access Upgrade (Existing Access Point) | Biscotasing access point | Clean-Up, Add Privies, Boat Launch | Operations standards |
| Natural Heritage Education Strategy | Identification of themes and self use approaches to deliver heritage appreciation messages | Fact sheet, map, self-guided trails, site descriptions, interpretive displays | Possibly with partnerships |
| Trail Plan, Site Planning and Construction | Identify areas with potential: such as The Elbow (D4 & W1), Duke Lake (D2), Reynolds Creek (NE7 & W1) | Hiking trails for camping and interpretive purposes. | Possibility of creating backcountry trails in wilderness, natural environment and development zones |
| Memorandum of Understanding | Spanish River Provincial Park | CPR bridge, Metagama Crossings | Maintaining corporate infrastructure in such a way as to protect park features and values |
| Cultural Heritage Research (Archaeological and Historical) | Signature Site | Further inventory and research on identified archaeological locations and features | First Nations' and public input and fieldwork may provide additional information (possibly through partnerships) |
| Research and monitoring (Wildlife) | Biscotasi Lake | Ongoing | Ongoing partnerships |
| Research and monitoring (Forestry) | Signature Site | Study of old growth red and white pine | Possible through partnerships |
| Research and monitoring (Fisheries) | Biscotasi, EMA lakes | Lake Surveys | Possibly through partnerships |
| Research (Visitation) | Monitor visitation at access and development zones, backcountry campsites | Spring, summer, fall weekend questionnaire | Field work (possibly with partnerships). |

**Table 7: Phase 2-Implementation**

| *Project* | *Description* | *Size* | *Comments* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Access Point Development | Hamlet of Biscotasing, Duke Lake, Sheahan, The Elbow | Campsites (Duke, Elbow), privies, kiosks | Site Plan required |
| Site Development | Duke Lake, The Elbow | Campsites, overnight and short-term capacity, waste management, kiosk, etc | Site Plan required |
| Heritage Facility | Biscotasing or Duke Lake | Small Interpretive Centre | Site Plan Required, possible partnership with local communities e.g., Biscotasing, Pogamasing, Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation |

## 9.4 Partnerships

During the implementation phases, opportunities for partnerships will be encouraged for projects which relate to resource stewardship, operations, and development. Ontario Parks and MNR will encourage partnerships and business agreements for the mutual benefit of all interests, including the protection of the signature site's features and values.

Partnerships may be pursued with industry, local communities, Aboriginal communities, environmental organizations, local angler and hunter groups, snowmobile clubs and others. Opportunities that may contribute to local economies will be encouraged.

## 9.5 Marketing

The nine signature sites identified in the *Land Use Strategy* are featured areas that have significant tourism and recreation potential which merits increased planning, management, and promotion. A marketing plan may be prepared for the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site and would be consistent with the overall marketing strategy of Ontario Parks/MNR. The marketing plan for Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site would provide approaches for promoting the signature site on the basis of its natural and cultural heritage values, and its recreational and tourism opportunities. The feasibility of promoting and marketing the site as a year-round destination may be explored.

# 10.0 ONGOING PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

## 10.1 Preliminary Management Plan Review

The preliminary management plan will undergo Aboriginal and public review in order to develop an approved *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management Plan*. The review will be implemented in the following manner:

| |
|---|
| Review initial management planning process |
| Update background information and data on signature site resources and visitor use |
| Review management plan for adherence to implementation priorities and provincial policies |
| Review management topics, and identify new issues and concerns. Address any outstanding issues in an amendment document for public review |
| Review and receive approval for plan amendment |

## 10.2 Amendments and Review to Management Plan

Park management plans and strategies) are reviewed every ten years, and have a 20-year life-span. If major amendments to the final management plan are required, a review of the management plan may be conducted sooner than ten years. The *Spanish River Valley* Minitegozibe *Signature Site Management Plan* review, amendment, and ongoing operations will be undertaken by a planning team made up of representatives from Ontario Parks and Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) districts.

At the time of the approved management plan review, the significance of the Metagama Road Water Crossings will be evaluated through a feasibility study. This study will assess the importance of the bridges to the forest industry, as well as examine the impact the bridges may be having on tourism and recreation.

## 10.3 Future Boundary Refinement

Future research and further detailed earth and life science assessments, plus the collection of cultural and recreational values information, may be warranted. This would determine whether boundary amendments to the Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site are necessary.

Waterway parks, such as the Spanish River Provincial Park, serve many roles: environmental protection, education, and the provision of recreation services and tourism opportunities. The waterway boundary should incorporate sufficient land to meet earth and life science representation objectives, and secure the integrity of natural or cultural values. In addition, boundary refinements may also be

necessary to address specific park management issues.

Recent documentation has provided some initial insights regarding the adequacy of the existing boundary. Boundary adjustments in the future may be required to provide greater protection for signature site values, which extend beyond the signature site's current boundary.

Results of the public consultation associated with the development of the signature site management plan would also be used to help determine where a boundary refinement may provide a significant contribution to the park's natural and cultural heritage representation, or other recreational values.

The final management plan will acknowledge that future boundary refinements which support the objectives of ecological integrity, and the completion or enhancement of species representation may be warranted and will also acknowledge that any such refinements would also meet applicable land use planning and *Environmental Assessment Act* requirements.

***The Elbow***

## 10.4 Water Management Planning

Once completed, the *Spanish/Vermilion Rivers Water Management Plan* will be subject to a review every five to ten years, at which time there will be an opportunity to make revisions and amendments. The result of any periodic review of a water management plan may trigger an extended review. The review may necessitate an amendment or revision to the plan, which would then be subject to public consultation prior to renewal. At any time when new data, information, or issues arise as a result of new policies, research, studies, or monitoring, a standing advisory committee will review the information and determine if the water management plan needs to be amended. The steering committee may then request an amendment, and MNR may issue an order to amend the plan.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix A: **Glossary of Terms**

Appendix B: **Spanish River Valley *Minitegozibe* Signature Site Preferred Zoning Maps**

Appendix C: **Permitted Activities Index by Provincial Park and Zone**

Appendix D: **Guidelines for Exploration Best Practices in Enhanced Management Areas**

Appendix E: **Implementation and Class Environmental Assessment Screening**

## Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

**Access Road** – Existing roads or trails that have been used for resource harvesting and to provide access to the land base.

**Annual Work Schedule (AWS)** – A statement, mainly tabular in form, showing the order and extent of all work of any nature by the forest industry, to be carried out during one year consistent with the forest management plan. The annual work schedule lists operations which were previously planned and approved in the forest management plan and are scheduled for implementation during that year.

**Area of Concern (AOC)** – A geographic area within an area of operations (forest stands selected for harvest, renewal and tending operations) which is adjacent to an identified natural resource feature, land use or value that may be affected by forest management activities.

**All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV)** – A vehicle propelled or driven otherwise than by muscular power or wind and having four wheels, all of which are in contact with the ground, a steering handlebar and a seat that is designed to be straddled by the driver. An ATV is designed to carry a driver only (i.e., no passengers).

**Authorized Roads and Trails (Existing)** – Roads that have been agreed upon in a letter of agreement between Ministry of Natural Resources / Ontario Parks and a non-government interest. Snowmobile trails are the authorized trails of the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs.

**Authorized Resource Users** – Individuals or groups who have been issued a letter of authority to use motorized vehicles to carry out those activities associated with their licences within the Signature Site. These include trappers, bear management area operators and baitfish dealers. Authorized resource users also include those existing private property owners and land use permit holders who may travel by mechanized means to access their property only.

**Backcountry Recreation** – Includes canoe tripping and backpacking in remote areas, accessible only by non-mechanized means.

**Bear Management Area (BMA)** – A large area of Crown land that is managed by the bear management area licensee for the sustainable harvest of black bear.

**Commercial Tourism** – A service or facility which offers resource-based recreational activities from a lodge and outpost camps. The operation must have a Resource-based Tourism License, which is issued by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

**Commercial Baitfish License** – An area of water that has been licensed for the purposes of commercially taking minnows and other baitfish.

**Crown Forest Sustainability Act** – An Act of the Ontario Legislature to provide for the sustainability of Crown forests and, in accordance with that objective, to manage Crown forests to meet social, economic and environmental needs of present and future generations.

**Crown Land** – All land and water held by the Province, both land that has never been sold and land that has been reacquired.

***Crown Land Use Policy Atlas*** – A Ministry of Natural Resources strategic planning document that provides Crown land planning direction in policy reports concerning the use of land and water in a defined area (e.g., provincial park, enhanced management area, forest reserve). The *Crown Land Use Policy Atlas* has replaced the *District Land Use Guidelines* (OMNR 1983). Available online at: www.crownlanduseatlas.mnr.gov.on.ca.

**Cultural Heritage Resource**: Any resource or feature of archaeological, historical, cultural, or traditional use significance. This may include archaeological resources, built heritage or cultural heritage landscapes. Heritage resources and features are usually identified by federal or provincial agencies, municipalities, municipal heritage committees or other equivalent local heritage groups, and local and regional band

councils. Some heritage resources and features are legally "designated", and can be found in official sources. Some may only be inventoried or listed, either officially, or by interested stakeholders. Others have never been identified, although this does not necessarily diminish their cultural significance.

**District Land Use Guidelines (DLUG)** – Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) planning document which displays direction concerning the use of land and water in a defined area. It identifies where and how MNR intends to achieve its objectives in a specific district through the use of Crown land and through influencing the use of private land.

**Eco-district** – The term comes from the Ecological Land Classification system for Ontario. The system provides for the hierarchical classification and inventory of ecosystems in Ontario and is based on broad geological, climatic and physiographic patterns. The system has three levels, including ecozones, ecoregions, and ecodistricts. Ecodistricts represent the smallest spatial divisions and are entirely nested within ecoregions, which again are nested within ecozones.

**Ecological Integrity (EI)** – A condition in which biotic and abiotic components of ecosystems and the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities are characteristic of their natural regions and rates of change and ecosystem processes are unimpeded.

**Enhanced Management Area (EMA)** – Enhanced management areas are a new land use category in *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (1999) and have been established to provide more detailed land use direction for Crown land. EMAs are intended to maintain a range of values, some of which warrant specific management policies to enhance a particular feature or value.

**Environmental Assessment** – The identification and evaluation of the effects of an undertaking and (where appropriate) its alternatives on the environment, as contained in a document prepared in accordance with the Ontario and/or Canadian *Environmental Assessment Act*.

**Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR)** – An electronic bulletin board where the public can access information on changes affecting the environment in Ontario.

**Existing Land Holder** – An existing land holder refers to any person holding Crown land occupational authority, such as land use permit, Crown leases, easements or licenses of occupation. It also refers to patent land holders adjoining the Signature Site (enclosed or landlocked).

**Forest Management Activities** – Includes the production of wood and wood products, provisions for proper environmental conditions to sustain wildlife, protection against flooding and erosion, recreation and protection and production of water supplies.

**Forest Management Plan (FMP)** – A document containing pertinent information and prescriptions by means of which forest policy, aims, and objectives are translated into a continuity of specific treatments on a management unit for a specified period of years.

**Forest Management Unit (FMU)** – An area of Crown forest designated under section 7 of the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*.

**Forest Reserves** – A land use designation applied to areas that were initially identified for inclusion in a provincial park but where subsequent detailed examination determined that there were existing mining claims or leases. Forest reserves are areas where protection of natural heritage and special landscapes is a priority, but some resource use can take place with appropriate conditions. The intention is that these lands will be added to the park if a claim or lease is retired through normal processes. Commercial forest harvest, new hydroelectric power development, and peat extraction will not be allowed, but most other resource and recreational uses will be permitted, provided that they are consistent with the features and values that are being protected.

**Headwaters** – The source (springs, bogs, lakes, etc.) and first order streams of a drainage system.

**Interim Management Statement (IMS)** – Management direction for provincial parks that provide interim direction in the absence of a park management plan.

**Land Disposition** – The sale or lease of Crown land or the disposition of Crown land by other instruments issued under the *Public Lands Act* (excluding work permits); disposition normally leads to development for various purposes (e.g., residential and cottage lots, recreation camps, tourism resorts, waterpower sites).

**Land Use Permit (LUP)** – A permit to occupy a specific site on Crown land for a specific purpose. The permit does not convey any right, title or interest in the resource being occupied. A *Commercial Land Use Permit* allows for commercial uses of the site to generate income. These typically consist of remote outpost camps that provide overnight accommodation for clients engaged in resource-based activities such as hunting, fishing or dog-sledding. A *Private Recreational Land Use Permit* allows the construction and use of a cottage or "camp" for private (non-commercial) recreational activities.

**License of Occupation** – A permit to occupy, similar to a land use permit, but generally for longer time periods (e.g., 40 years). These are generally used in such cases as the flooding of land due to water control structures.

**Mechanized Travel** – For the purpose of this preliminary management plan, refers to all-terrain vehicles (including snowmobiles) and vehicles as defined under the *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Royal Assent received on June 20, 2006 and proclamation pending)*, as well as other mechanical devices such as bicycles or paddleboats that are not required for medical purposes.

**Mining Lands** – Includes claims and leases as defined under the *Mining Act*.

**Motorboat** – A boat propelled by a motorized device (gas or electric).

**Motorized Vehicle** – Includes an automobile, motorcycle, motor assisted bicycle unless otherwise indicated in the *Highway Traffic Act*, and any other vehicle propelled or driven otherwise than by muscular power, but does not include a street car, or other motor vehicles running only upon rails, or a motorized snow vehicle, traction engine, farm tractor, self-propelled implement of husbandry or road-building machine within the meaning of this act.

**Non-conforming Use** – An activity that is not normally permitted within a particular class park or zone but is considered an accepted existing use that is contrary to policy.

**Off-Road Vehicle (ORV)** – A vehicle propelled or driven otherwise than by muscular power or wind and designed to travel on not more than three wheels or on more than three wheels and being of a prescribed class of vehicle; (*Off-Road Vehicles Act*). The term off-road vehicle is often used as a broader term than all-terrain vehicle to cover all forms of such vehicles (with the exception of snowmobiles and automobiles).

***Ontario Forest Accord*** – An agreement between Ministry of Natural Resources, forest industry and the Partnership for Public Lands that outlines specific commitments and guidelines related to parks and protected areas and forest management in Ontario.

**Patent Land** – Privately owned land that has been defined through an official site boundary (G-Plan) issued by the Surveyor General of Ontario.

**Personal Watercraft** – A marine vehicle that is propelled by motorized means and is primarily used for recreational travel (e.g., a "Jet Ski")

**Policy** – A legal statement of direction developed for the purpose of guiding present and future actions and decisions.

**Provincial Park** – An area of land and water protected and regulated under the Ontario *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Royal Assent received on June 20, 2006 and proclamation pending)*.

**Public Consultation** – Through public information centres, Environmental Bill of Rights registry, newspaper releases and mailings, the public can participate in the Signature Site planning process.

**Resource Based Tourism License (RBTL)** – A licence issued by the Ministry of Culture, usually for commercial outpost camps and lodges that offer resource based tourism.

**Remoteness** – Refers to the distance from roads and motorized trails. The perception of remoteness may also include the presence of development (e.g., buildings, bridges) or people and activities (e.g., other park users). Semi-remote refers to areas that are relatively natural in setting but are interspersed by existing development, access and uses.

**Roads (Forestry)** – A road or part of a road on public land and includes the bridges, shoulders, ditches and right-of-way thereof, but does not include the King's Highway or a secondary highway, a tertiary road, a resource road or an industrial road designated under the *Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act* (1990), or a road under the jurisdiction of a statute labour board or a local roads board (*Public Lands Act*, c. P.43, s. 48).

Highway: Includes a common and public highway, street, avenue, parkway, driveway, square, place, bridge, viaduct or trestle, any part of which is intended for or used by the general public for the passage of vehicles and includes the area between the lateral property lines thereof (*Highway Traffic Act*).

Primary Road: A road constructed, maintained and used as part of the main all-weather road system which provides access to the management unit as a whole. Primary roads are essentially permanent roads, regularly maintained, with a life in excess of 15 years.

Secondary Road: A road that is essentially a branch off a primary road, providing access to areas of operations within a management unit. These roads are not considered permanent and are not normally maintained beyond the five to 15 year period of their use.

Tertiary Road: A road built for short-term use (i.e., up to five years), for harvest and subsequent renewal operations. Tertiary roads may be un-surfaced or thinly surfaced, and are not maintained beyond the period of their use; often they are reforested.

**Species at Risk (SAR)** – A species of flora or fauna that has been assessed and designated as Extinct, Extirpated, Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern, by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) and/or the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO). MNR's Species at Risk in Ontario List should be consulted to obtain the current status designations (available at www.ontarioparks.com/english/sar.html).

**Statement of Environmental Values (SEV)** – A document that outlines a proposal that is subject to the Environmental Bill of Rights.

**Sustainable Forest License (SFL)** – Under Part III of the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*, a renewable licence to harvest forest resources in a management unit that requires the licensee to carry out renewal and maintenance activities necessary to provide for the sustainability of the Crown forest in the area covered by the licence. This type of licence may be granted for a term of up to 20 years.

**Tenure** – Title or disposition status that a specified area is under (e.g., land use permit, patent (private ownership) or lease).

**Tourism Lake** – Designated lake intended to provide commercial tourism services.

**Trapline** – An area of Crown lands and waters that is managed by the licensee for the sustainability of its fur-bearing animals.

**Wilderness** – Wilderness areas are typically in a near-natural state, very remote and the

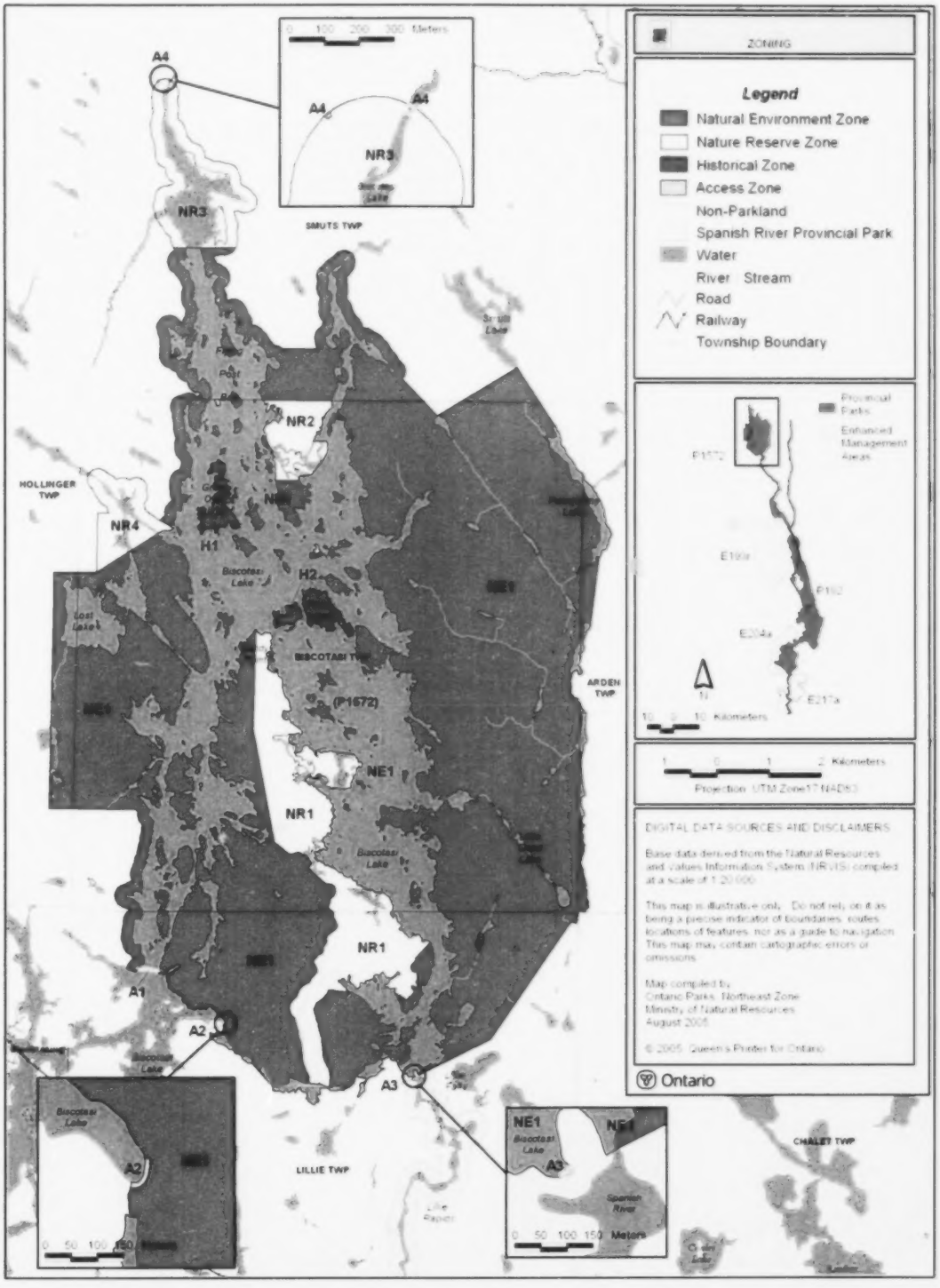
probability of meeting other people is very low. Active management of wilderness is minimal.

**Wildlife Management Unit (WMU)** – An administrative unit of Ministry of Natural Resources in which wildlife populations are regulated and managed. The units have an ecological foundation and are based, at least in part, on differences within and amongst species.

**Viewscape** – The distance from a feature that a specified activity cannot be observed (e.g., evidence of forest management activities cannot be observed 1000 metres from a river).

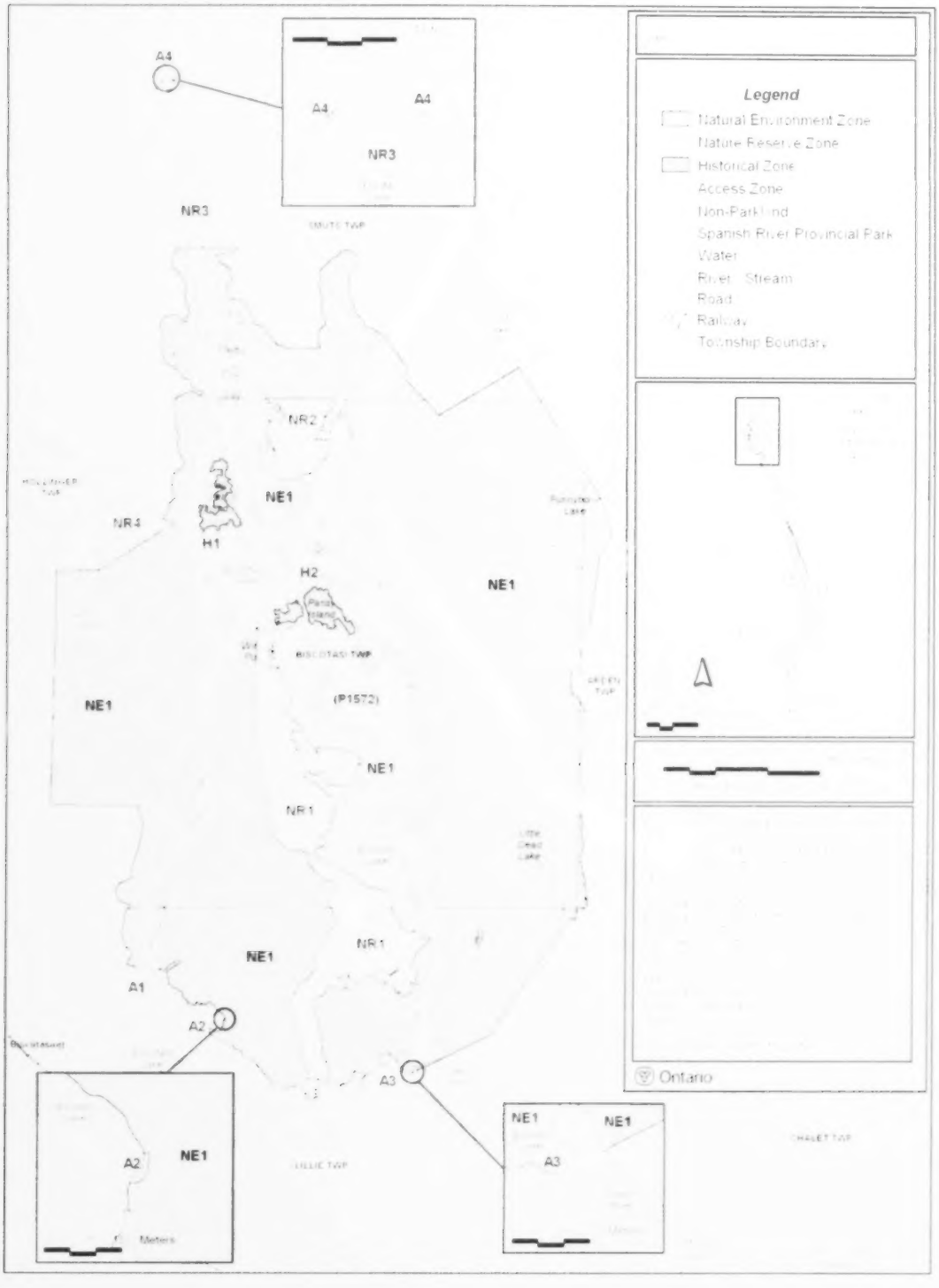
## Appendix B: Spanish River Signature Site Preferred Zoning Maps

Map A: Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning

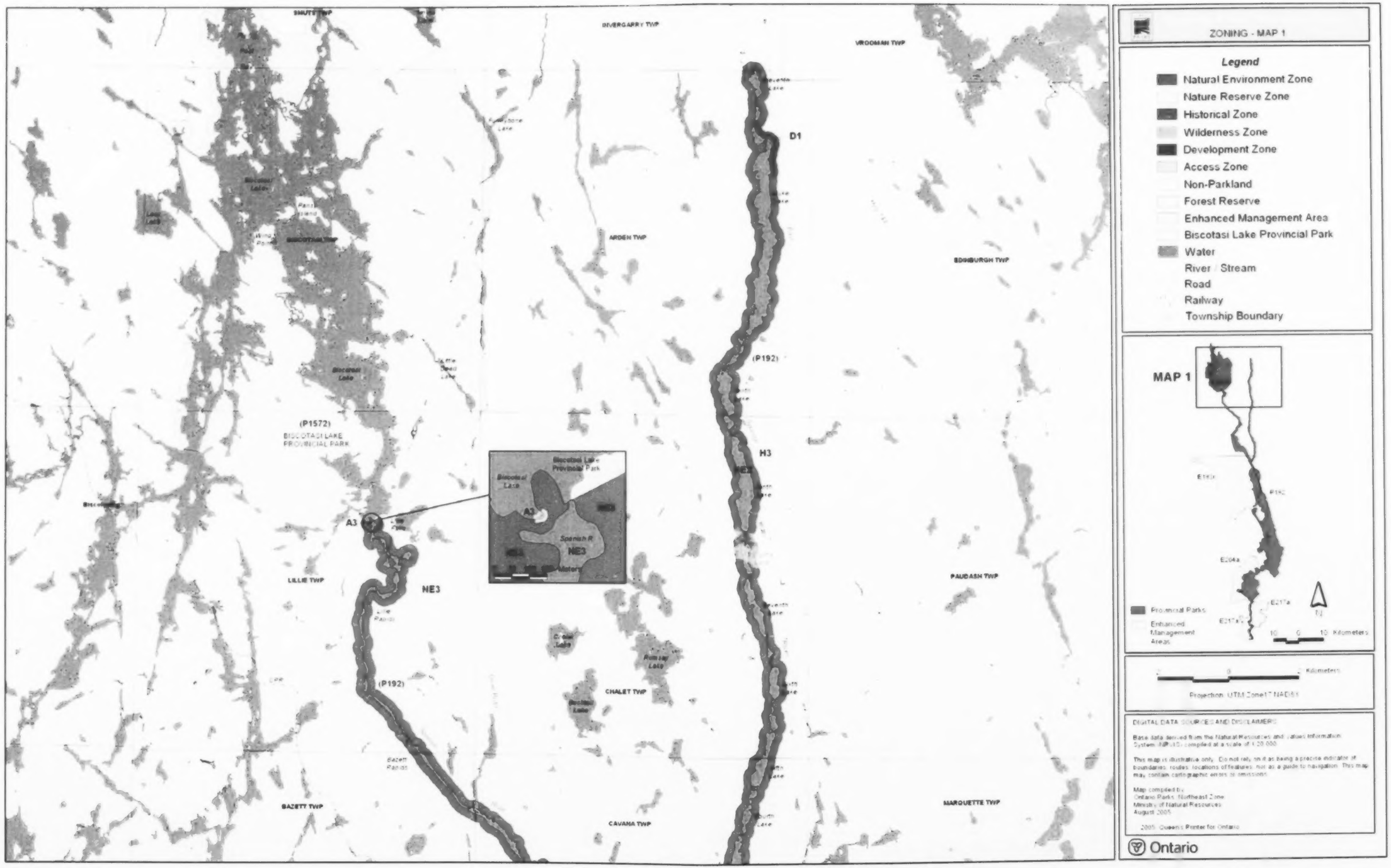


## Appendix B: Spanish River Signature Site Preferred Zoning Maps

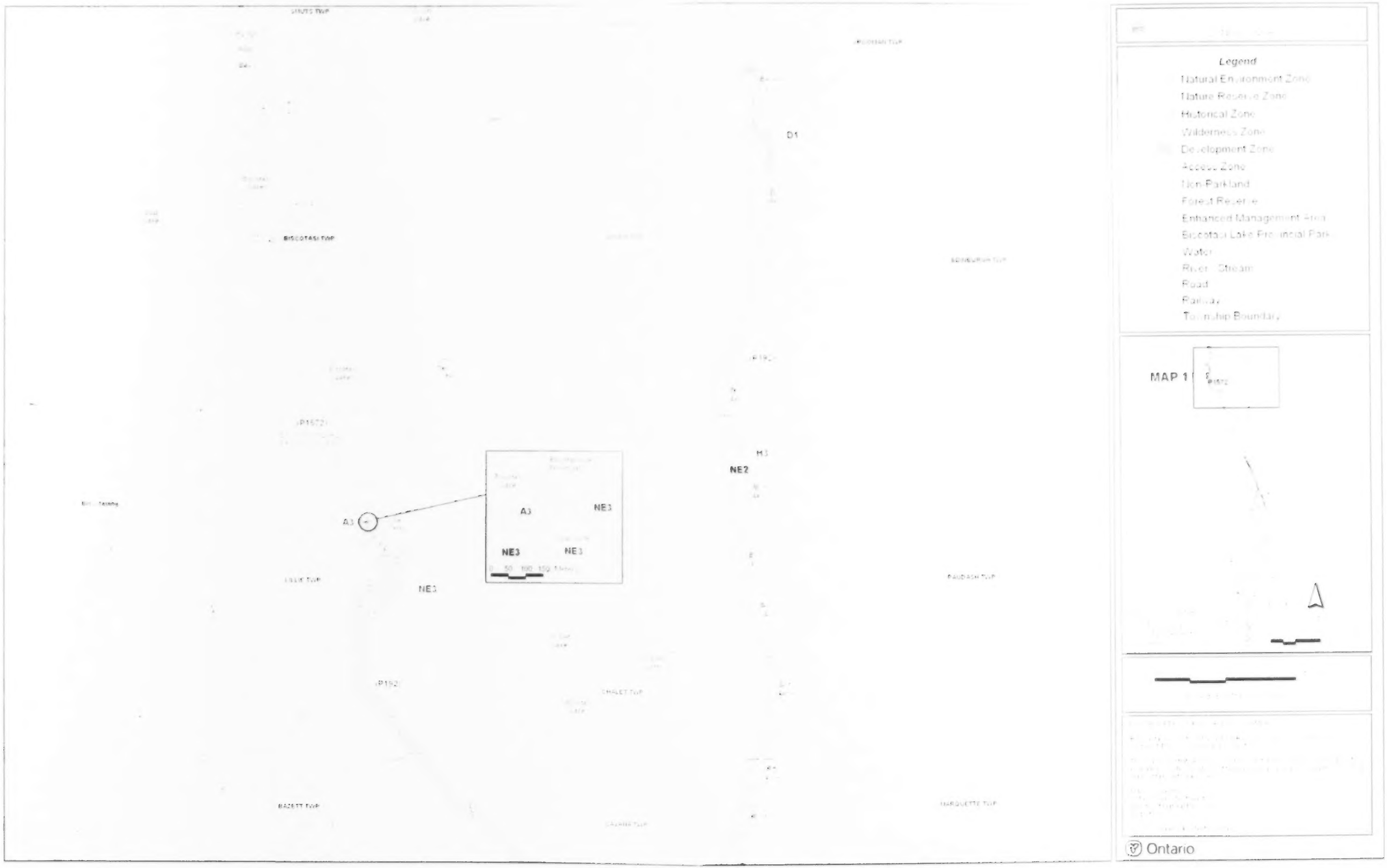
Map A: Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning



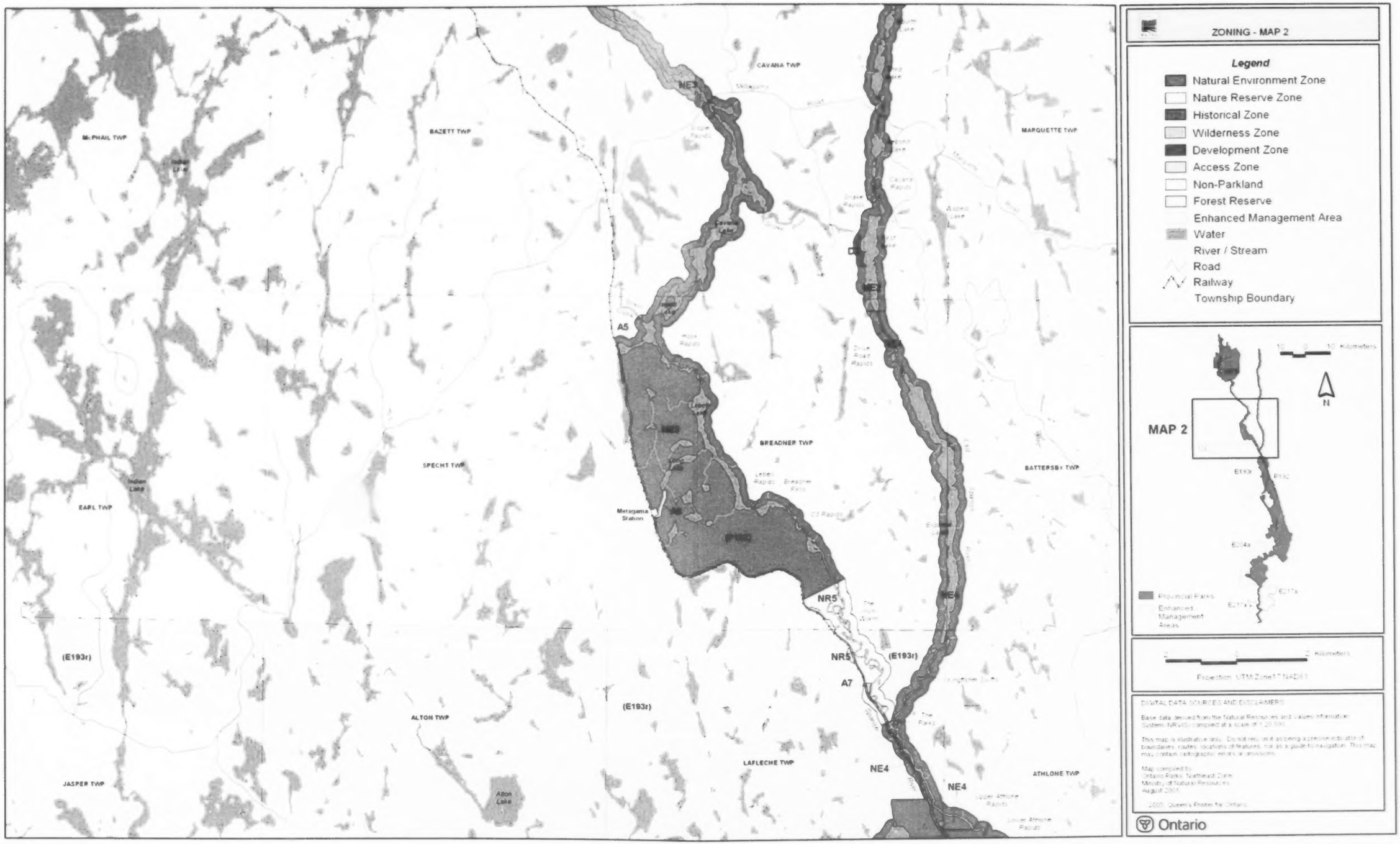
Map B: Spanish River Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map 1



Map B: Spanish River Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map 1

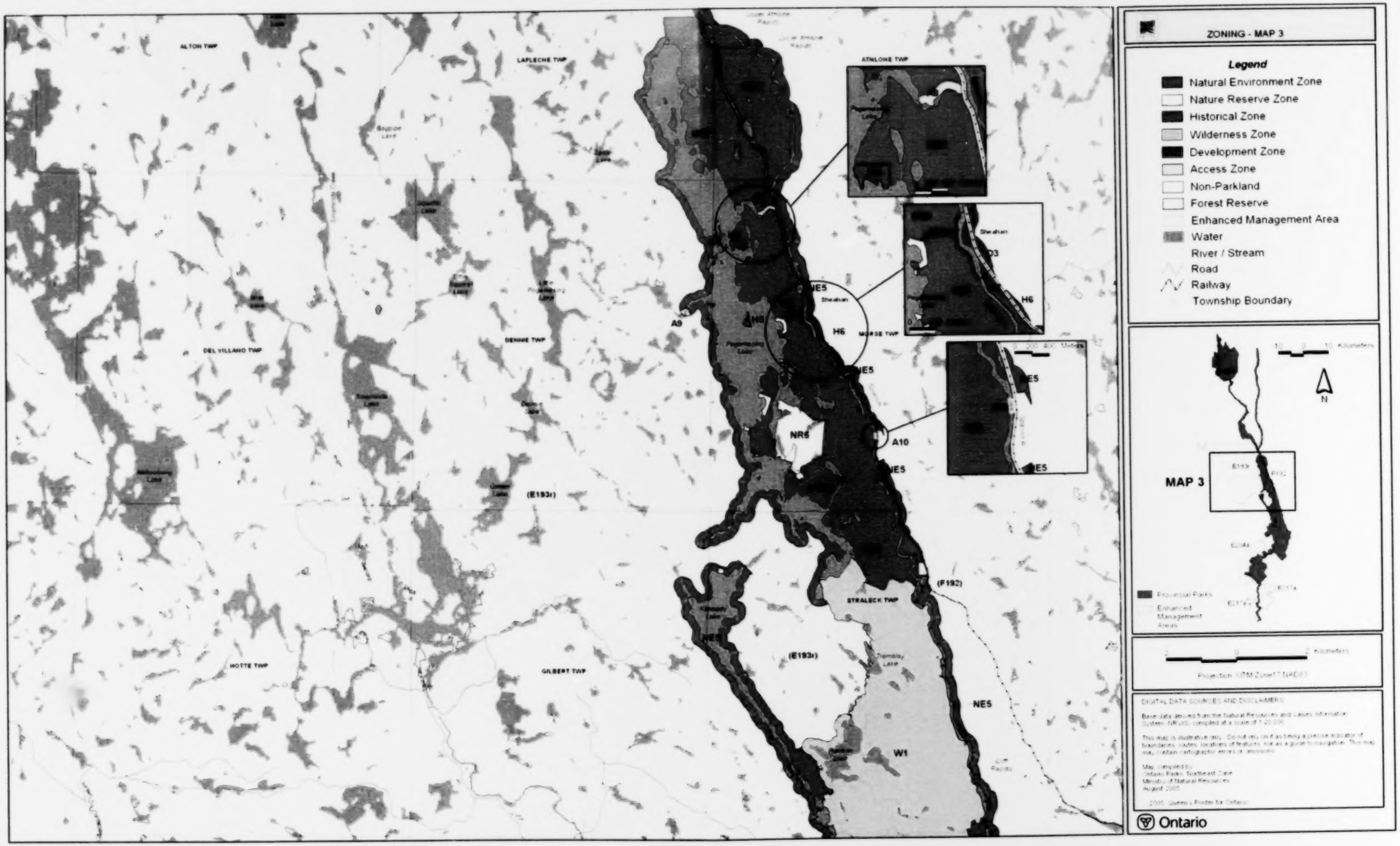


Map C: Spanish River Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map 2

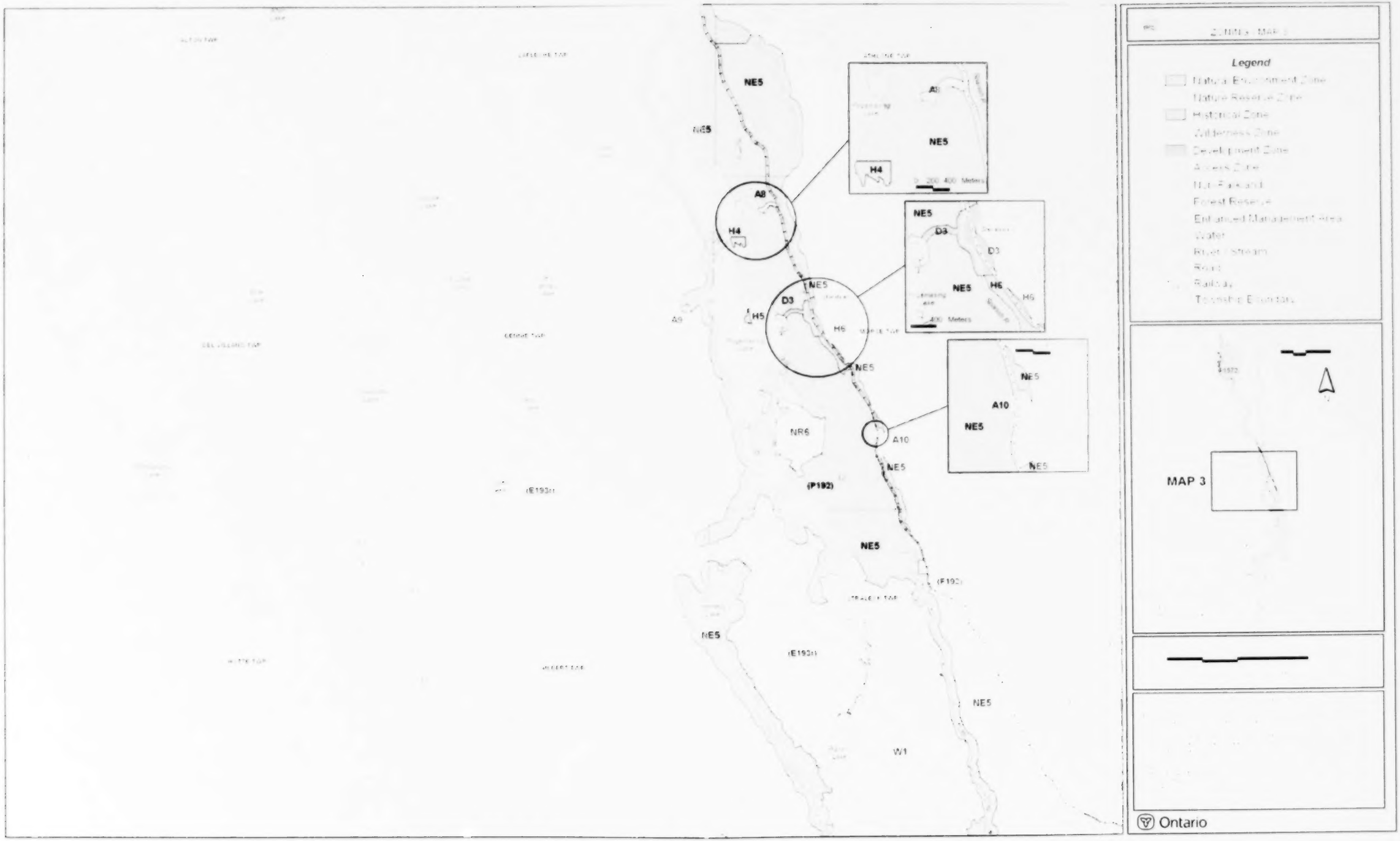


Map C Spanish River Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map 2

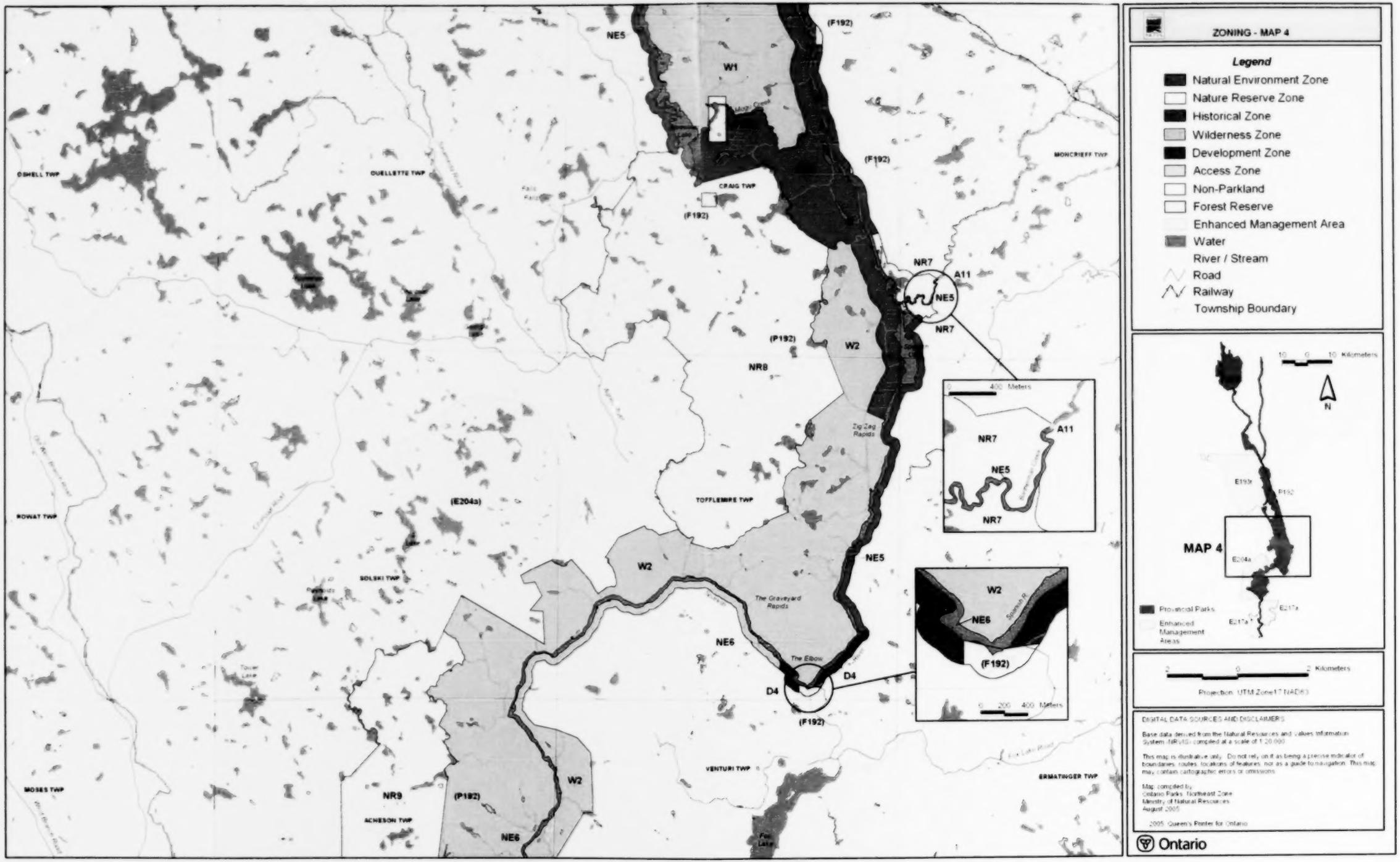
Map D: Spanish River Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map 3



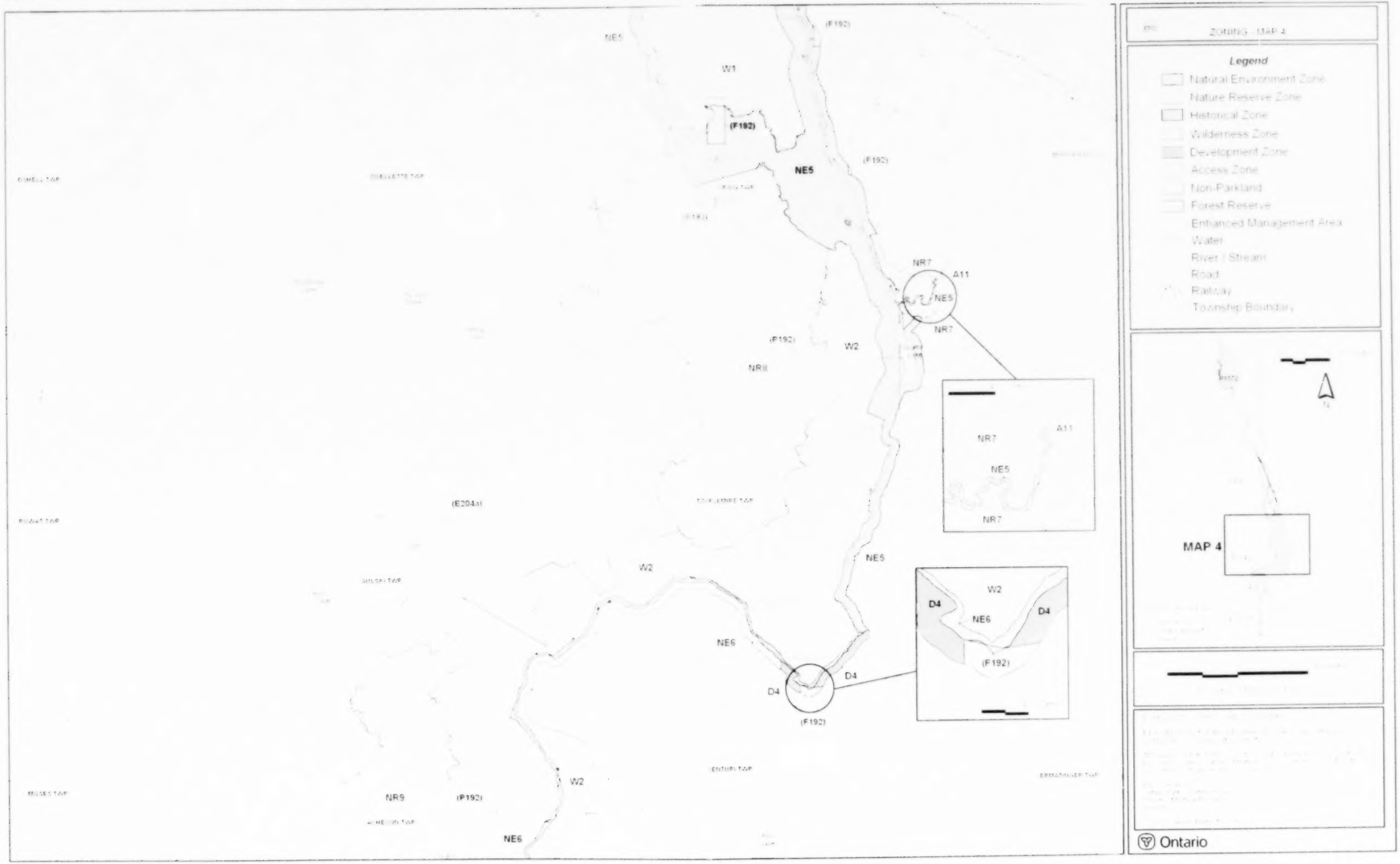
Map D: Spanish River Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map 3



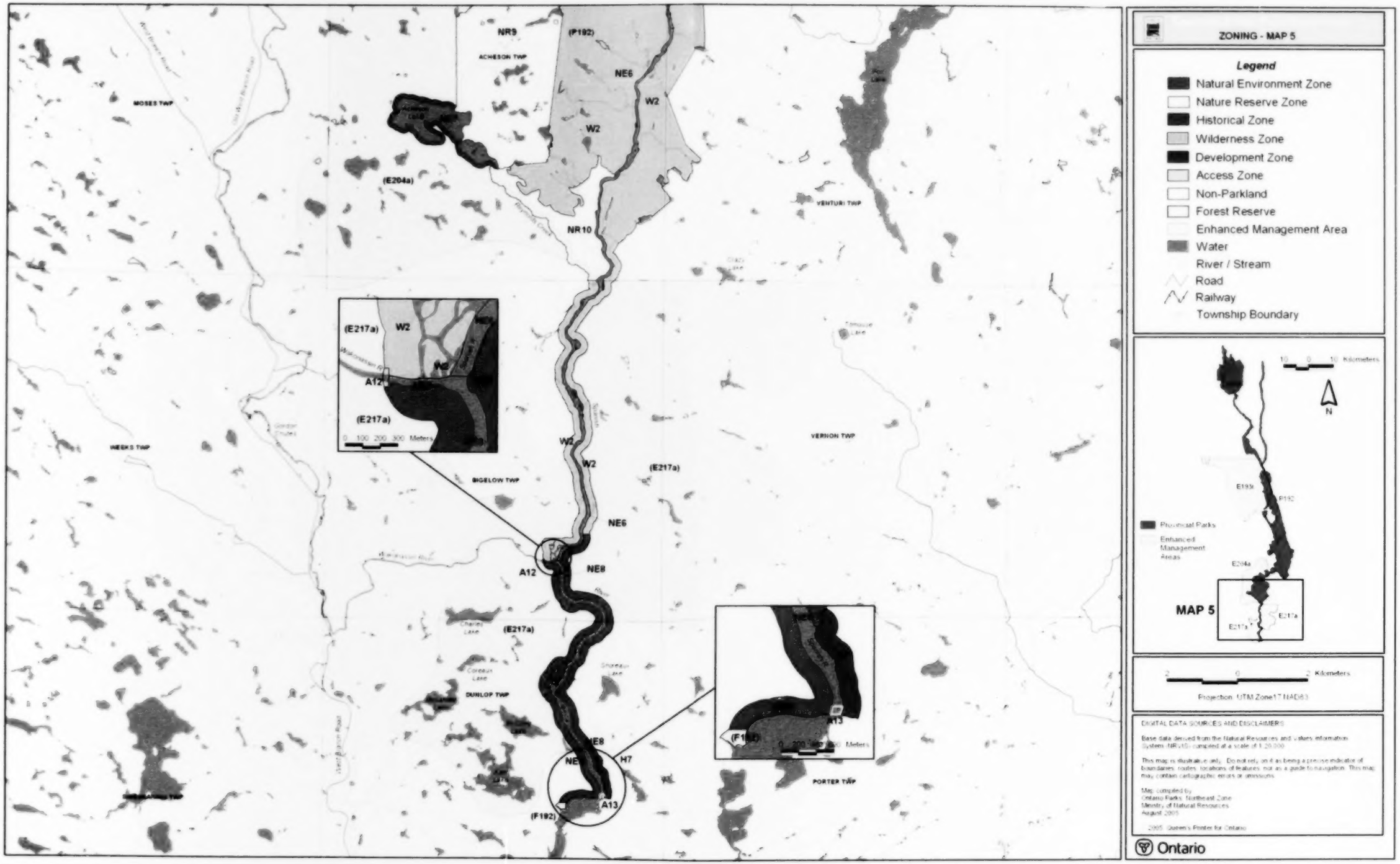
Map E: Spanish River Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map 4



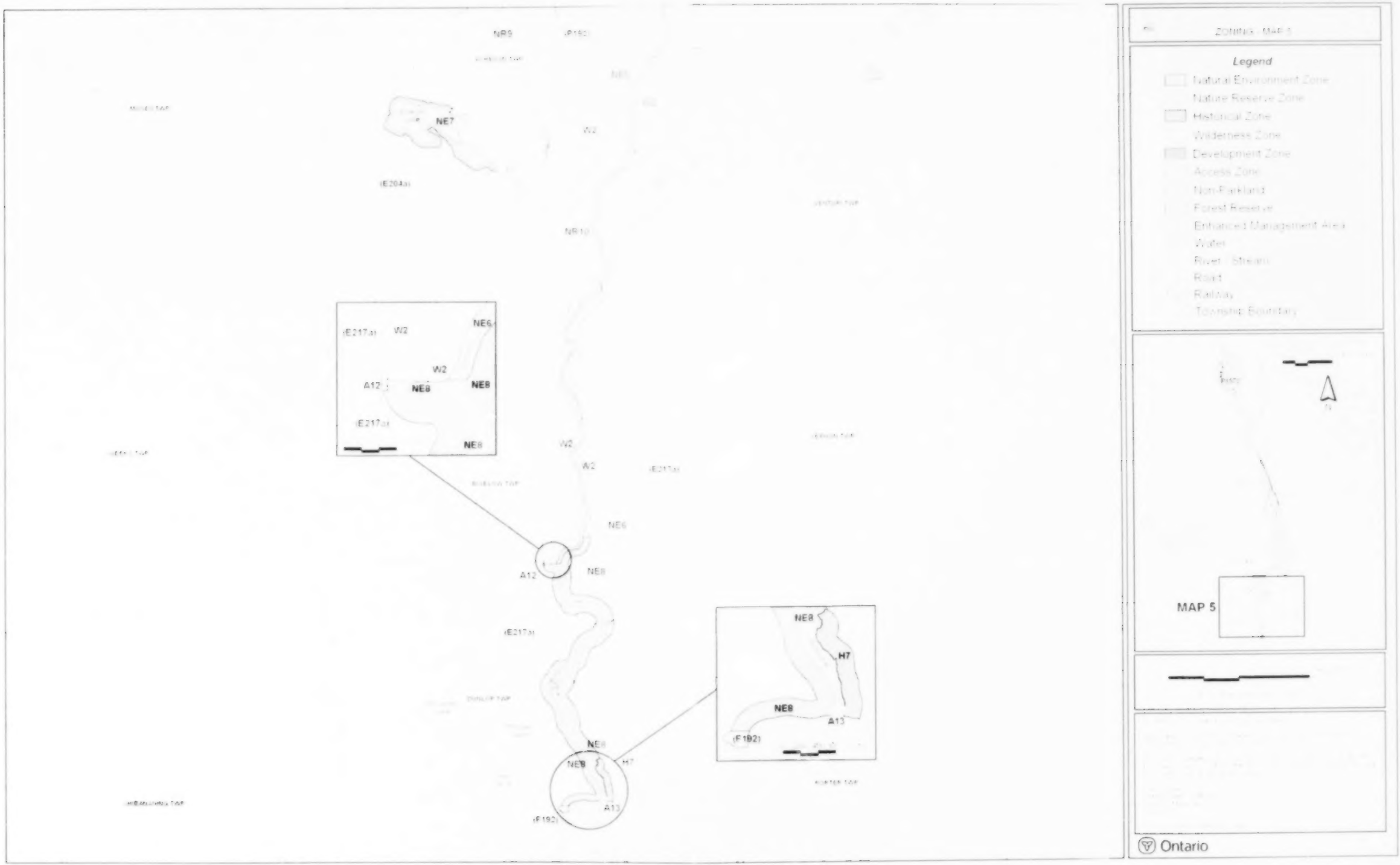
Map E Spanish River Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map 4



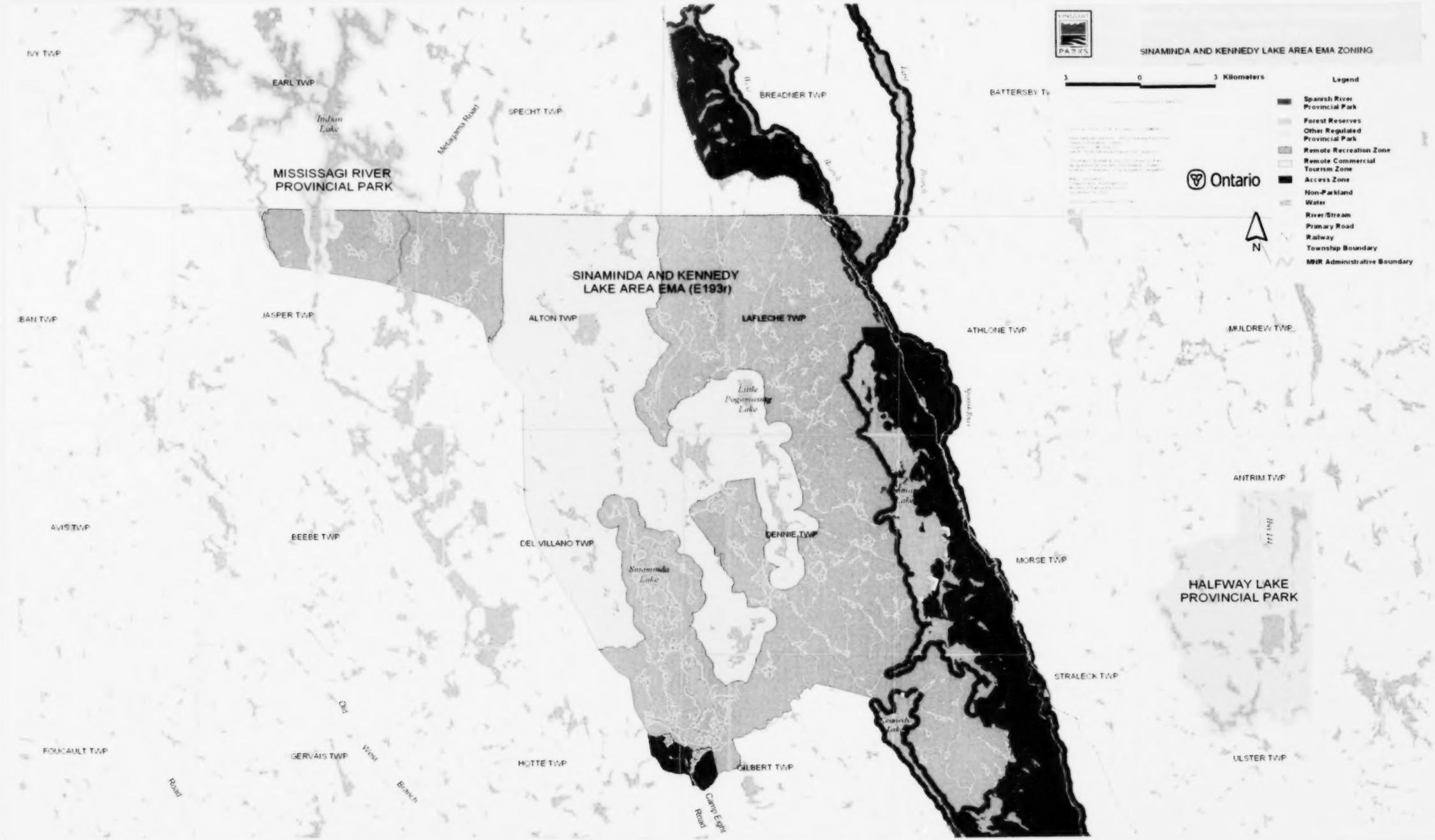
Map F: Spanish River Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map 5



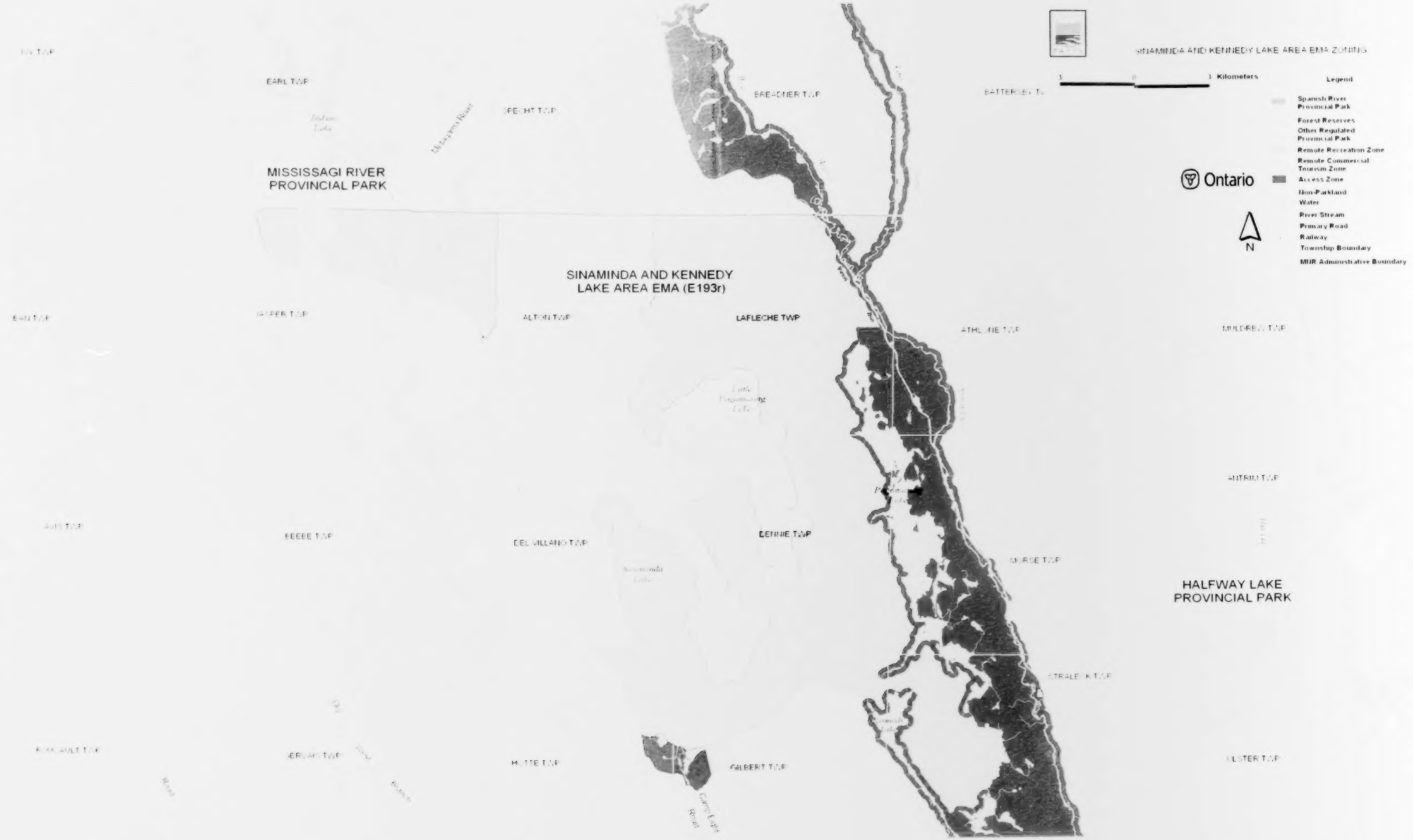
Map F: Spanish River Provincial Park Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map 5



Map G: Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area Enhanced Management Area Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map



Map G: Sinaminda and Kennedy Lake Area Enhanced Management Area Preferred Preliminary Zoning Map



## Appendix C: Permitted Activities Index by Provincial Park and Zone

The permitted (P), non-permitted (NP) and non-compatible (NC) uses for each zone are listed below. Permitted activities are activities which may either currently take place in a zone, or which may be permitted to occur pending further assessments of environmental impacts, and, if necessary, an approved business case. Non-permitted activities are activities which are not consistent with provincial park policy and will not be encouraged in the zone. Non-compatible activities are activities which are not suitable for the landscape or features in a zone and, as such, will be discouraged.

**Table 1: Permitted Uses of Biscotasi Lake Provincial Park**

| **Activities**<br>**P** = Permitted<br>**NP** = Not Permitted<br>**NC** = Not Compatible | **Access Zones** | | | | **Historical Zones** | | **Natural Environment Zones** | **Nature Reserve Zones** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | A1 – Biscotasi Lake | A2 – Biscotasi Lake South | A3 – Biscotasi Lake Outflow | A4 – Flying Post Bay North | H1 – Grey Owl Island | H2 – Pansy and Redhouse Islands | NE1 – Central Biscotasi Lake | NR1 – Central Biscotasi Lake Peninsula | NR2 – Floating Cattail Marsh | NR3 – Flying Post Bay Marsh | NR4 – Scarp Creek Marsh |
| Aircraft Use<br>***Commercial*** (By Permit) | P | NC | NC | NC | NP | NP | P | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| ***Private*** (Existing Land Holders) | P | NC | NC | NC | NP | NP | P[3] | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| ATVs / ORVs[4]<br>***Existing Authorized Trails Only*** | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| ***ATV Off-trail Use*** | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Canoeing | P | P | P | P | NC | NC | P | P | P | P | P |
| Camping (Designated Sites Only) | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | P | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Cans and Glass Bottles | Can and glass bottle ban in effect for entire park. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Commercial Outpost Camp | NP | NP | NP | NP | P[5] | NP | P | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Hiking / Walking | NC | NC | NC | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P |
| Hunting (Including BMAs) | NP | NP | NP | NP | P | P | P | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Motorboats | P | P | P | P | NC[6] | NC | P | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Overnight Parking | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Snowmobiles<br>***Authorized Trails*** | P | P | P | NP | NP | NP | P | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Sport Fishing | Sport fishing is permitted per the Ontario Fishing Regulations throughout the park. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Trapping | Existing operations only. New operations not permitted. | | | | | | | | | | |

[3] Private aircraft landing for existing land holders (non-conforming use).
[4] Existing authorized ATV/ORV trails which support current authorized resource harvesters, commercial outpost camp operators or land holders only. Refer to section *8.3 Motorized Travel* for further information.
[5] Existing authorized Commercial Outpost Camp only (non-conforming use).
[6] Motorboats permitted to access existing authorized Commercial Outpost Camp.

**Table 2a: Permitted Uses of Spanish River Provincial Park**

| **Activities**<br>**P**= Permitted<br>**NP** = Not Permitted<br>**NC** = Not Compatible | **Access Zones** | | | | | | | | **Development Zones** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | A6 – Metagama Station | A7 – The Forks | A8 – The Flume | A9 – Pogamasing Creek | A10 – Pogamasing Siding | A11 – Bannerman Creek | A12 – Wakonassin River | A13 – Agnew Lake | D1 – Duke Lake-Crossroads North | D2 – First Lake Cabin | D3 – Sheahan | D4-The Elbow-Crossroads South |
| Aircraft Use<br>***Commercial***<br>(By Permit) | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC |
| ***Private***<br>(Existing Land Holders) | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC |
| ATVs / ORVs[7]<br>***Existing Authorized Trails Only.*** | P | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | P[8] | NP | P | P[9] |
| ***ATV Off-trail Use*** | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Canoeing | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P |
| Camping (Designated Sites Only) | NP | NP | NP | NP | NC | NP | P | NP | P | NP | P | P[10] |
| Cans and Glass Bottles | Can and glass bottle ban in effect for entire park. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Commercial Outpost Camp | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Hiking / Walking | P | P | P | P | NC | NC | P | NC | P | NP | P | P |
| Hunting (Including BMAs) | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Motorboats[11] | NC | NC | NC | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P |
| Overnight Parking | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | P | NP | NP | P |
| Snowmobiles<br>***Authorized trails*** | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | P | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Sport Fishing | Sport fishing is permitted per the Ontario Fishing Regulations throughout the park. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Trapping | Existing operations only. New operations not permitted. | | | | | | | | | | | |

[7] Existing authorized ATV/ORV trails which support current authorized resource harvesters, commercial outpost camp operators or land holders only. Refer to section *8.3 Motorized Travel* for further information.
[8] This use is permitted in parking areas only.
[9] This use is permitted in parking areas only.
[10] Roofed accommodation, such as yurts or cabins, may be considered in this zone.
[11] Motorboats are limited to 25 horsepower in Spanish River Provincial Park, except on Pogamasing Lake, where there is no horsepower restriction

**Table 2b: Permitted Uses of Spanish River Provincial Park**

| **Activities** **P**= Permitted **NP** = Not Permitted **NC** = Not Compatible | **Historical Zones** | | | | | **Natural Environment Zones** | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | H3 – Ninth Lake Pictographs | H4 – Pogamasing Gravesite | H5 – Historic Hudson's Bay Post | H6 – Historical Wye Townsite and Sawmill | H7 – Eagle Rock | NE2 – Spanish River East Branch | NE3 – Spanish River West Branch | NE4 – Expanse Lake | NE5 – Main Spanish River and Pogamasing Lake | NE6 – The Royal Ride | NE7 – Acheson Lake | NE8 – South Spanish River |
| Aircraft Use ***Commercial*** (By Permit) | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | P | NP | NP | P | NP | P | NP |
| ***Private***[12] (Existing Land Holders) | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | P | NP | NP | P | NP | P | NP |
| ATVs / ORVs[13] ***Existing Authorized Trails Only.*** | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| ***ATV Off-trail Use*** | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Canoeing | NC | NC | NC | P | NC | P | P | P | P | P | P | P |
| Camping (Designated Sites Only) | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | P | P | P | P | P | NP | P |
| Cans and Glass Bottles | Can and glass bottle ban in effect for entire park. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Commercial Outpost Camp[14] | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | P | P | NP | P | NP | NP | NP |
| Hiking / Walking | NC | P | P | P[15] | P | P | P | P | P | NC | P | P |
| Hunting (Including BMAs) | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P |
| Motorboats[16] | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC | P | P | NP | P | P | P | P |
| Overnight Parking | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Snowmobiles ***Authorized trails*** | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | P | P | NP | P | NP | NP | P |
| Sport Fishing | Sport fishing is permitted per the Ontario Fishing Regulations throughout the park. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Trapping | Existing operations only. New operations not permitted. | | | | | | | | | | | |

[12] Private aircraft landing for existing land holders, where permitted (non-conforming use).

[13] Existing authorized ATV/ORV trails which support current authorized resource harvesters, commercial outpost camp operators or land holders only. Refer to section *8.3 Motorized Travel* for further information.

[14] Authorized Commercial Outpost Camps only.

[15] Trail for walking tour linked to Sheahan.

[16] Motorboats are limited to 25 horsepower in Spanish River Provincial Park, except on Pogamasing Lake, where there is no horsepower restriction.

**Table 2c: Permitted Uses of Spanish River Provincial Park**

| Activities<br>**P**= Permitted<br>**NP** = Not Permitted<br>**NC** = Not Compatible | Wilderness Zones | | Nature Reserve Zones | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | W1 – Tremblay Lake-Mogo Creek | W2 – Graveyard-Cedar Rapids | NR5 – Meandering Scrolls | NR6 – Pogamasing Esker and Wetland | NR7 – Bannerman Creek | NR8 – Agnes River Old Growth Pine | NR9 – Spanish River Valley Old Pine | NR10 – Lower Reynolds Creek |
| Aircraft Use<br>***Commercial***<br>(By Permit) | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| ***Private***<br>(Existing Land Holders) | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| ATVs / ORVs[17]<br>***Existing Authorized Trails Only.*** | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| ***ATV Off trail use*** | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Canoeing | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P |
| Camping (Designated sites only) | P | P | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Cans and Glass Bottles | Can and glass bottle ban in effect for entire park. | | | | | | | |
| Commercial Outpost Camps | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Hiking / Walking | P | P | P | P[18] | P | P | P | P |
| Hunting (Including BMAs) | P | P | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Motorboats[19] | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P |
| Overnight Parking | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Snowmobiles | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| Sport Fishing | Sport fishing is permitted per the Ontario Fishing Regulations throughout the pa | | | | | | | |
| Trapping | Existing operations only. New operations not permitted. | | | | | | | |

[17] Existing authorized ATV/ORV trails which support current authorized resource harvesters, commercial outpost camp operators or land holders only. Refer to section *8.3 Motorized Travel* for further information.

[18] The development of recreational trails is not permitted in this zone.

[19] Motorboats are discouraged in Nature Reserve and Wilderness zones in order to protect sensitive features and values. This activity will be monitored.

## Appendix D: Guidelines for Exploration Best Practices in Enhanced Management Areas[20]

These guidelines affirm the mineral exploration industry's commitment to sustainable development, a concept that requires balancing the need for economic growth with good stewardship in the protection of human health and the natural environment. The guidelines offer practical methods and recommended practices which, when applied, will ensure that an exploration project is carried out with the lowest levels of disturbance possible to its natural surroundings within the enhanced management area (EMA). The suggested guidelines do not take precedence over Ontario statutes and regulations but rather comply with them by providing standard procedures for maintaining good environmental practice at the various stages in the exploration process.

Explorationists should ensure that they have an up to date EMA Values Maps for the EMA within which they are conducting exploration activities. EMA Values Maps will be provided to the explorationist by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM) in cooperation with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). The exploration community should ensure that they identify any natural heritage, recreational, fish and wildlife, tourism or forestry (e.g., plantation) values within their exploration area of interest. By following the suggested guidelines contained herein, members of the Ontario exploration industry may carry out their work in the search for new wealth in enhanced management areas with confidence that they are doing so in an environmentally sensitive manner.

### Protecting Values in Enhanced Management Areas

Careful regard and avoidance of impact is strongly recommended to protect all values in enhanced management areas (EMA). All EMAs are found within forest management units. Area of Concern (AOC) prescriptions must be included in the forest management plans for all forest management units in Ontario under the terms of the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*. The AOC prescriptions are legally binding on forest companies as they conduct their timber harvest, silviculture and forest regeneration activities. AOCs may be encountered by the exploration community as they conduct exploration and development activities in EMAs. To protect fish and wildlife and other values (e.g., cultural, natural heritage, forestry and tourism) encountered during exploration activities, it is strongly recommended that site-specific measures be developed on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the MNR.

Observe the following points in the management of your exploration program:

1. Be aware of the three Rs of exploration and practice them at every stage of your exploration program RESPECT the environment in which you work. REFRAIN from unnecessarily disturbing the natural environment. RESTORE the natural setting of areas where you have worked.

2. Ensure that workers are familiar with environmental protection measures and industrial hygiene requirements. Make sure that they are aware of regulatory requirements and environmental codes and are also properly trained to carry out any procedures pertaining to environmentally related situations.

3. In the event of a proposed program of Advanced Exploration under Part VII of the *Mining Act*, conduct environmental baseline studies consisting of water, soil and, if necessary, lake bottom samples prior to any major disturbance of the natural surroundings. These baseline data are essential references for monitoring the property during its later development.

4. Ensure that your exploration program is designed and budgeted to take into account all potential sensitivities associated with fish and fish habitat, wildlife, downstream water users,

[20] Taken from *Lake Nipigon Basin Signature Site Ecological Land Use and Resource Management Strategy* (OMNR 2004k).

marshes and wetlands, native lands, archaeological sites and all other Crown land values and user groups. Be aware that exploration activities undertaken in or close to marshes, bogs, lakes, streams and rivers require special care and planning. Communication with the District Biologist at the local MNR office is strongly recommended.

Observe the following procedures and practices during each stage of your exploration program:

**Field Reconnaissance**

1. Be familiar with all statutes, regulations, amendments, and guidelines governing all aspects of mineral exploration in the area in which you are working. In the event of proposed activities that exceed allowable disturbances under Part VII of the *Mining Act*, consult with the Mineral Development Coordinator, MNDM. Before starting an advanced exploration program, ensure that all necessary permits have been acquired. Be aware of the location of all natural heritage, recreational, fish and wildlife, tourism or forestry (e.g., plantation) values in the area of your proposed work. These are found on the EMA Values Maps as supplied through the Resident Geologist Office and the office of the Regional Land Use Geologist, MNDM, in cooperation with the MNR. Ensure that you have a copy of the EMA Values Map for your area even if you have not been contacted.

2. Ensure that all employees, including contractors, stakers, etc., hired for an exploration project are trained in and knowledgeable about sensitive natural heritage values, environmental protection measures and industrial hygiene requirements. Make sure that they are familiar with regulatory requirements and environmental codes and are properly trained to carry out procedures pertaining to environmental protection and remediation.

3. Ensure that contractors and subcontractors know their responsibilities and liabilities and that they discharge their duties correctly.

4. Minimize disturbance to forestry plantation areas by respecting fences and gates. Observe all signs posted by landowners and forestry license holders and respect the rights of others.

5. Avoid disturbing vegetation and wildlife unnecessarily. Keep vehicles on established roads whenever possible. Obtain permission and guidance from landowners or forest license holders when travel to off-road sites is necessary.

6. In principle, carry out what you carry in. Use proper receptacles for refuse and try to leave an area cleaner than it was upon your arrival. With proper approvals, reusable items such as lumber, frames, floors, etc., may be neatly piled and stored at the site.

7. Check for local MNR regulations governing the lighting of fires. The lighting of fires may be prohibited at certain times of the year. Ensure that appropriate fire fighting equipment in quantities appropriate to the number of personnel and type of activity is available on site.

8. Ensure that temporary work camps are located, constructed and operated in such a way that they will have the minimum impact on the environment. Always keep camps neat, orderly, safe and clean and in accordance with local regulations.

9. Avoid any disturbance to community watersheds, fisheries habitat, groundwater upwellings and spawning beds by familiarizing yourself with their locations. Do not operate vehicles or heavy equipment in streams or on stream or pond banks. Keep to a minimum any clearing, grubbing, excavating or other surface disturbances near streams and ponds. If such activity is proposed, preserve a natural buffer zone of undisturbed natural vegetation ten metres or more wide at the water's

edge to prevent siltation. If in doubt, contact your local MNR Biologist.

10. Handle all fuel and hazardous materials with care and avoid spills by ensuring that they are stored properly. Control any spills and/or leaks by establishing berms around storage containment areas and by placing water pumps and portable operating equipment in metal drip trays. In the event of a spill, notify the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) and MNR as soon as possible.

11. Use on-site field vehicles and equipment for exploration activities only. Avoid unnecessary disturbance to nearby residents and wildlife.

**Property Acquisition**

1. Investigate and understand the current status of surface and mining rights before you take action to acquire a property. Be familiar with the regulations and mining laws governing property acquisition, as outlined in the *Mining Act*. Be aware of all regulations and laws relating to environmental liabilities before you acquire a property that has been previously mined, explored and/or developed. Consider documenting the environmental condition of the property at the time of acquisition with field notes and photographs.

2. Avoid any misunderstanding with surface rights owners by discussing your presence and plans in the area with them once you have acquired mineral rights. Ascribe to the notification and compensation requirements of Sections 78 and 79 of the *Mining Act*. Maintain a cordial relationship with local residents and keep them informed during the course of your program.

**Campsites**

1. Be familiar with and comply with all statutes, regulations, amendments, and permit requirements governing the operation of campsites. A temporary encampment may be erected on a mining claim for the purpose of conducting mineral exploration activities. If the campsite is not located on a mining claim, the maximum allowable time for resident camping on Crown land is 21 days.

2. Locate your campsite away from watercourses and maintain it in a neat and orderly fashion.

3. Provide sewage treatment facilities capable of servicing the resident and visiting camp population. Ensure that pit privies, conventional septic tank/tile bed systems, and packaged sewage treatment plants are designed, installed, and, where necessary, disposed of in accordance with local regulations. Consult with the local health unit for details.

4. Select and use products that pose the least threat to the environment. Re-use containers as much as possible and whenever appropriate. Take all recyclable products to a recycling facility.

5. Compost organic kitchen waste. Remove inorganic domestic waste to approved municipal sites, to an approved landfill for the camp, or to a recycling facility. In regions populated by bears, establish a special containment system for kitchen wastes.

6. Confine fuels, lube oils and greases during storage and transportation. Ensure that used oil facilities are established at all permanent sites and are regularly monitored. Collect and remove hazardous substances used in machinery (such as batteries) to designated disposal facilities.

7. Provide proper first aid and fire protection equipment at the camp and make sure that the equipment complies with current regulations.

8. Make every effort to avoid attracting wildlife to the camp.

9. At the end of operations, dismantle campsites that are to be abandoned. Leave campsites that are to be used for future operations in a clean and tidy

condition. Bury organic waste and remove all other refuse from the site, taking advantage of recycling facilities as much as possible. Backfill all pits in accordance with local regulations. Where possible, rip up a site that is to be abandoned to break surface compaction and allow natural revegetation to take place.

10. Avoid impacting natural heritage, recreational, fish and wildlife, tourism or forestry (e.g., plantation) values as defined by the MNR on EMA Values Maps, as supplied by the Resident Geologist Office, MNDM.

**Road Building and Access**

1. Consult with your local MNR office and initiate the Work Permit application process for new road construction (requiring roadbed improvement). Be sensitive to the needs of other land users; for example, tourist lodges and resort operators. Trail construction for access to mineral exploration workings (no road bed improvement and under three metres in width) does not require a Work Permit.

2. Plan and locate roads and trails to maximum advantage for your operations but with minimum levels of construction and disturbance. Take advantage of landform and vegetation to screen road locations whenever possible. Avoid impacting on all values defined on EMA Values Maps supplied by the Ontario MNR.

3. Clear right-of-way timber and debris in an orderly manner. Dispose of debris by a) burning, if permitted; b) burying in off-road push piles, if practicable; or c) in a manner prescribed by local regulations. Consult with the local sustainable forest license (SFL) holder before constructing your trail or road to determine whether they prefer to harvest the timber themselves beforehand, or will collect any trees that have been cut. Whenever possible, stack commercial timber so that it can be easily collected.

4. Control surface water run-off and erosion by installing culverts, bridges, waterbars, and ditches whenever necessary. Keep insloping to a minimum, and provide for frequent water diversions off the road when necessary. Remove all unnecessary berms from road edges.

5. Develop a reclamation plan following the detailed road construction guidelines and Work Permit requirements.

6. Avoid impacting natural heritage, recreational, fish and wildlife, tourism or forestry (e.g., plantation) values as defined by the MNR on EMA Values Maps, as supplied by the Resident Geologist Office, MNDM.

**Geological, Geochemical and Geophysical Surveys**

1. Avoid unnecessary brush cutting and blazing of trees while laying out grid lines. Cut grid lines at the minimum width possible.

2. Upon completion of a survey, remove any wire and other extraneous material that may endanger the lives of birds and other wildlife.

3. Avoid contaminating soil and water during the course of your work.

4. Avoid impacting natural heritage, recreational, fish and wildlife, tourism or forestry (e.g., plantation) values as defined by the MNR on EMA Values Maps, as supplied by the Resident Geologist Office, MNDM.

**Trenching and Stripping**

1. Avoid any disturbance to community watersheds, fisheries habitat, upwellings and spawning beds by familiarizing yourself with their location. Do not operate vehicles or heavy equipment in streams or on stream or pond banks. Keep to a minimum any clearing, grubbing, excavating or other surface disturbances near streams and ponds. If such activity is proposed, preserve a

natural buffer zone of undisturbed natural vegetation ten metres or more wide at the water's edge to prevent siltation. If in doubt, contact your local MNR Biologist.

2. Clear timber and debris in an orderly manner. Dispose of debris by a) burning, if permitted; b) by burying it in off-road push piles, if practicable or c) in a manner prescribed by local regulations. Consult with the local SFL holder before constructing your trail or road to determine whether they prefer to harvest the timber themselves beforehand, or will collect any trees that have been cut. Whenever possible, stack commercial timber so that it can be easily collected.

3. Backfill, cover and revegetate all excavations and other surface disturbances that have not exposed reusable geological information such as outcrop. Avoid excessive stripping by using backhoes or excavators, rather than bulldozers, whenever possible.

4. If your proposed area of stripping exceeds an area of 10,000$m^2$ or is within 100 metres of a waterbody and exceeds an area of 2,500$m^2$, you must file a Closure Plan under Part VII of the *Mining Act*. Contact the Mineral Development Coordinator at the MNDM.

5. Avoid impacting on natural heritage, recreational, fish and wildlife, tourism or forestry (e.g., plantation) values as defined by the MNR on EMA Values Maps, as supplied by the Resident Geologist Office, MNDM.

**Drilling**

1. Ensure that drilling company workers under contract are aware of current environmental regulations and will comply with them in the course of their work. Clearly define all environmental and industrial hygiene responsibilities, duties and liabilities of the contractor in contractors' agreements.

2. Keep to a minimum any noise pollution produced by equipment.

3. Ensure that drilling contractors avoid impacting on natural heritage, recreational, fish and wildlife, tourism or forestry (e.g., plantation) values as defined by the MNR on EMA Values Maps, as supplied by the Resident Geologist Office, MNDM.

4. Locate drill sites and water lines in areas where access to them and their operation will create the least amount of disturbance. Take advantage of local landform and vegetation to screen drilling activities whenever possible.

5. Eliminate the need for elaborate access roads by using the smallest size of drilling equipment and drill holes that will ensure an adequate sampling of the target that you are seeking.

6. Ensure that proper receptacles for debris are provided and used at drill sites, and that sites are cleaned up as soon as equipment has been removed.

7. Do not allow drilling wastes to run uncontrolled over land or ice surfaces or into watercourses. Recycle as much drilling mud and water as possible by using tanks or sumps.

8. Avoid wasting water by installing and using shut-off valves when water lines are not in use.

9. Use biodegradable materials whenever possible.

10. Keep oil-absorbent material and/or oil booms on site (depending on the amounts of fuel stored) for use in the event of a spill.

11. Upon completion of drilling, clean the site, remove the drill casing and cap or plug the drill hole.

**Abandonment of Exploration Activity**

1. Outslope and remove all berms from roads no longer needed, and install appropriate water barriers and other erosion control structures. Remove culverts, low bridges and other

structures that may cause blockage or unwanted diversion of watercourses.

2. Backfill and grade all open excavations such as exploration trenches, adits and shaft waste dumps as close to the original contour as possible. Grade to contour or smooth out drill sites, building sites, roads, or other major disturbances resulting from construction during the exploration program.

3. Cap or plug drill holes and close or otherwise make safe from unauthorized entry, all tunnels, shafts and other openings. Make sure that procedures on site abandonment contained in Part VII of the *Mining Act* have been correctly followed.

4. Remove all trash and other foreign material from the exploration area and dispose of in an approved waste disposal site.

5. Where possible, and at the proper time of the year, revegetate all disturbed surface areas by planting trees that are suitable for the area. In addition or as an alternative, prepare the disturbed surfaces in a way that will encourage maximum natural revegetation.

6. Inspect gates and fences used for access to ensure that they have not been damaged.

7. When abandoning exploration sites in staked areas close to settled areas, remove any physical evidence of work such as ribbons and pickets. Be aware that most jurisdictions do not allow staking posts or survey monuments to be removed.

8. Advise local residents, landowners, native groups and government officials that you are abandoning the site.

9. Avoid impacting natural heritage, recreational, fish and wildlife, tourism or forestry (e.g., plantation) values as defined by the MNR on EMA Values Maps, as supplied by the Resident Geologist Office, MNDM.

(Modified after the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada Guidelines for Exploration Practice, 1998)

## Appendix E: Implementation and Class Environmental Assessment Screening

| *Project* | *Class EA Category*[21] | *Reference(Class EA Appendix 2)* | *Notes* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Operation of site | A | Table 3: ID 81 | Operation and maintenance expected to have minor impacts. |
| Backcountry Operations | A | Table 3: ID 48 | Establishing new and maintaining existing backcountry sites expected to have minor impacts. |
| Access Strategy | A | Table 3: ID 43 | New buildings/structures will be minor developments/services. |
| Recreation Strategy | A | Table 3: ID 78 | Visitor programs/services expected to have minor impacts. New services may require further screening. |
| Vegetation Strategy | A | Table 3: ID 13, 27 | Invasive species, insect or forest diseases control measures may require further screening if species is fully established; otherwise project falls under Category A. In accordance with OLL-LUS, fuelwood cutting falls under Category A. Fire management, in conformity with Forest Fire Management Strategy for Ontario and the Prescribed Burn Planning Manual, falls under Category A. |
| Fisheries Strategy | A | Table 3:ID 10,13,18, 19 | Managing populations and new programs of stocking fish would be screened B/C/D. Ongoing operations fall under Category A. Invasive species control falls under Category A if species is not fully established or if project conforms with management direction; otherwise may require further screening. |
| Prepare Sign Plan | A | Table 3: ID 72 | Signs and outdoor displays expected to have minor impacts. |
| Campsite Upgrade | A | Table 3: ID 47 | Reconstruction (not including enlarging number of campsites or campsite capacity) of a campground considered maintenance and expected to have minor impacts. |
| Waste Management | A | Table 3: ID 81 | Operation expected to have minor impacts within signature site. |
| Access Upgrade (Existing Access Point) | B, C or D | Table 3: ID 41, 43 | Minor development expected to have little impact falls under Category A. Development of a new boat launch could screen as B. Requires further screening. |
| Natural Heritage Strategy | A | Table 3: ID 78 | Visitor programs and services, including signs and outdoor displays, are expected to have minor impacts. |
| Signature Site Trail Plan, Site Planning and Construction | A | Table 3: ID 70 | Minor development and all maintenance are expected to have minor impacts. |
| Memorandum of Understanding | A | Table 3: ID 55 | Minor maintenance of roads is expected to have minor impacts. |
| Cultural Heritage Research (Archaeological and Historical) | A | Table 3: ID 80 | Authorized research expected to have minor impacts. |
| Research and monitoring (Wildlife) | A | Table 3: ID 80 | Authorized research expected to have minor impacts. |
| Research and monitoring (Forestry) | A | Table 3: ID 80 | Authorized research expected to have minor impacts. |
| Research and monitoring (Fisheries) | A | Table 3: ID 80 | Authorized research expected to have minor impacts. |
| Research (Visitation) | A | Table 3: ID 80 | Authorized research expected to have minor impacts. |
| Sheahan Dump | A | Table 3: ID 91 | Non-hazardous and hazardous waste collection, carried out in accordance with Transport Canada and Ministry of Environment regulations, is expected to have minor impact. |
| Access Point Development (New) | A | Table 3: ID 43,48 | Minor development and establishing new backcountry sites considered part of maintenance. Minor impacts expected. |
| Site Development | A | Table 3: ID 43, 48 | Minor development and establishing new backcountry sites considered part of maintenance. Minor impacts expected. |
| Heritage Facility | B, C or D | Table 3: ID 44 | Potential for negative environmental effects. Requires further screening. |

[21] Screening considers class environmental assessments for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects and for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves.